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The Cospel and its Husies

A BOOK FOR THE YOUNG.

BY

J. H. WILSON, M.A.,

BARCLAY CHURCH, EDINBURCH.

LONDON: JAMES NISBET & CO., 21 BERNERS STREET.



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Parents, Subbuth-School Tenghers,

AND OTHERS

INTERESTED IN THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THE YOUNG,

THIS BOOK

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

WITH THE WISH AND PRAYER

THAT IT MAY HELP THEM IN THEIR IMPORTANT WORK.



Pagfings.

HAVE sought, in this volume, to present the Gospel in a way that may interest the young, and be understood by them. I feel assured but there are many children and young people who

that there are many children and young people who desire to know the way of salvation, and to be guided to the Lord Jesus as a personal Saviour. I would especially call the attention of such to the Address entitled, "Christ the Substitute." I believe that to be the very kernel of the Gospel, and to be the simplest and most intelligible form in which Gospel truth can be presented, either to the young or to the old. I have been greatly struck with the wonderful adaptation of this truth to people of all ages and of all classes. Children can receive it; the sick and dying can lay hold of it; the aged can take it in: it meets the case of the most highly educated; it suits the convinced and desponding on the one hand, and the self-righteous and

whole-hearted on the other. The very essence of the Good News consists in the offer which it makes of a Substitute, freely and at once, to every one to whom it comes.

As illustrating this important subject, I think it worth while to narrate the following incident which is said to have taken place during a recent war in another land. The narrative has just been sent to me by a friend:—

"In consequence of an insufficient number of volunteers offering themselves to serve in the army, it became necessary to raise more men by conscription. A gentleman, who had a large family, was drafted. The Provost-Marshal waited upon him with the information, and instructed him to prepare himself for joining the army. His wife and family, as might have been expected, were thrown into a state of grief and consternation at the prospect of the father and husband being compelled to occupy a position of such peril.

"An unmarried brother of the gentleman was on a visit at the time, and seeing the distress of the family, volunteered to be his brother's substitute, and was accepted. He occupied the same position in the army that his brother would have done, was shot down in one of the battles, and buried on the battle-field. Some time after, more men being required for the army, the same gentleman was again drafted, the Provost-Marshal waited on him the second time with the information, when the gentleman replied, 'I am dead.' The Provost-Marshal said, 'How can that be, when I see you alive and well before me?' The reply was, 'I am dead, and buried on the battle-field, in the person of my substitute, and the law has now no claim upon me.'

"It is reported that the case was tried in court, and the decision was, that he was literally and legally dead to the law, in the person of his substitute, and that the law had no power to compel him to serve in the army a second time."

Even so has each believer died in Christ his Substitute. He, too, can say,—"I am dead!" (2 Cor. v. 14.)

As to the *fruits* of the Gospel, these are brought out, more or less, throughout the volume. Those that form the subjects of the closing addresses, are only to be taken as specimens. I was especially anxious to find a place for a few others, such as Steadfastness, Courage, Conflict, and Praise. These, however, I must defer for the present.

These addresses, like those contained in previous volumes, were delivered to the young people of my charge. They were prepared amid the pressure of many other duties. I have no doubt the reader will mark occasional repetitions, and a familiarity in the mode of address, which may jar on sensitive ears. All I have sought to do, has been to throw them into a readable form. Some of them,—I daresay some parts of all,—may not seem particularly suitable for children.* The truth is, I have found the previous volumes so largely read by others than children,—among young tradesmen in workshops, in remote districts of the country, and in the Colonies,—that I could not help feeling, especially in revising for the press, as if these were a part of my audience to which I could not but have regard.

Next to pointing souls to the Lord Jesus as the one

^{*} Where the addresses are read to gatherings of children, I very earnestly recommend the dividing of each address into two parts.

Saviour of lost sinners, these two things have pressed themselves upon me-first, the need of carrying our religion into every-day life, and bringing it to bear upon all our ordinary work; and second, the desirableness of setting the Christian life before young people, and especially before boys, as a healthy, happy, manly thing. Next to believing in the conversion of children,* many of us need to learn what the life of a converted child should be. It is told of an earnest Christian youth who died not long ago: - "His life was so thoroughly natural and boyish, that while it was passing, it had no sense of strained piety, such as we have been so apt to associate with the idea of children converted when young. From first to last he was a joyous, happy, natural boy, ready to enter into all sorts of innocent fun, rejoicing in every manly sport, fond of sailing, climbing, swimming, base-ball, and cricket; and almost the foremost to lead in any adventurous expedition."

I would fain help, though in the smallest degree and in the humblest way, to a decided, bracing, manly religion among the young, as the great need and hope of our time.

^{*} See "The Conversion of Children," by my esteemed friend, Mr Andrew A. Bonar, Glasgow.



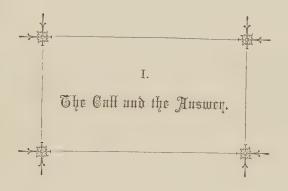
Contents.

					Page
I.	THE CALL AND THE ANSW	ER,			I
II.	THE GOSPEL AND ITS RECO	OMMENI	DATION,		21
III.	THE STRAIT GATE,				49
IV.	THE PRAYER AND THE PLE	EA,			73
V.	CHRIST THE SUBSTITUTE,				97
VI.	"THE HOLY GHOST SAITH	, To-da	Υ,"		123
VII.	CHRIST A FRIEND, .	•		4	155
TIII.	"WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?	, ,,			179
IX.	OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS,				203
Х.	Brotherly Love, .				231
XI.	. THANKFULNESS, .				257
XII.	Working,				287



Index of Hymns.

]	PAGE
I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY,	H. Bonar	•		2
Of Jesus we'll Sing,	T. Kelly	•		22
PILGRIM, BURDENED WITH THY SIN,	Crabbe	•		50
O FOUNTAIN ETERNAL, . Church P.	salter and E	Iymn-B	ook	74
O CHRIST, WHAT BURDENS BOWED				
Thy head,	A. R. C.			98
OH, NOW IS THE TIME,	A. R. C.	•		124
One there is above all others,	Newton			156
IF WASHED IN JESUS' BLOOD, .	M. C. W.			180
To thy Father and thy Mother,	A. R. C.		٠	204
Jesus, Lord, we look to Thee,	C. Wesley			232
WHEN I LOOK UP TO YONDER SKY,	Anon.			258
IN THE VINEYARD OF OUR FATHER,	Sabbath-Sa	hool Be	22	288





"Behold, I freely give

The living water-thirsty one, Stoop down, and drink, and live." I came to Jesus, and I drank

Of that life-giving stream;

My thirst was quenched, my soul rerevived, And now I live in Him.

"I am this dark world's light;

Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,

And all thy day be bright." I looked to Jesus, and I found In Him my Star, my Sun; And in that light of life I'll walk, Zill travelling days are done.



HERE can be no doubt of this—that, like other unconverted sinners, children, in their natural state, are lost. The fact that they

are children, and not men and women, does not make them sared—does not make them safe: and if not saved, then there is just the other way of it—they are lost. They are at a distance from God. Like the prodigal son, they are in a far-off land. They have no love for God and His ways. They forget God. They are without God in the world. They are thus in a state at once of sin and of danger; and the worst of it is, that they don't know it, or don't think about it, or are not alarmed by it, and so have no thought about, and make no effort after, escape and salvation. This is a sad state to be in—a terrible state.

Now, God does not leave them thus—does not give them their own way—does not let them alone. He comes to them. He calls them. He uses means to arouse them out of their sleep, to drive them out of their careless or evil ways, and draw them to Himself. As we shall see, He uses many means; when one does not succeed, trying another. And so, many children are saved. For we are not to think that God's people are only to be found among the old and those who are grown up. A large part of God's family consists of little children. Just as in other families you find children as well as older people, so it is in God's family; and just as in other families, the children are not the least dear and beloved part of the household, so it is in God's family.

Thanks be to God, there are many saved children, as well as saved men and women,—children of all ages, of three, and four, and six, and seven, and ten, and twelve, some of them dying early and getting soon home to heaven, but many of them living to be "old disciples," spending happy and useful lives, actively serving Christ, becoming the means of saving others, and at length, through grace, going to wear their crowns in glory.

I cannot but hope and trust that many of those whom I address are saved. At the same time, there may be not a few, about whom there is cause to be very anxious; and as, when they are otherwise in danger, we try to shew them their danger, and to get them to listen to the voice that calls them from it and bids them flee to a place of safety, so I would seek, with God's help, to do now. I would fain point out to them the greatest of all dangers and the one Refuge and Saviour.

I may state the subject of this Address as "The Call

and the Answer," a remarkable instance of which you will find in I Samuel iii. 1-10. Will you read these verses, and notice more especially the tenth verse:—

"And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for Thy servant heareth."

I do not mean so much to open up this passage itself as to direct your attention to four thoughts which it suggests:—I. The Sleep. II. God's Awakening Call. III. The Lying Down again. IV. God's Call Recognised and Answered.

I. The Sleep.—You may think of Samuel as now a boy about twelve years of age. With his little ephod or shoulder-dress of simple white cloth, you can fancy him discharging various sacred duties about the holy Tent or Tabernacle, and especially, as the attendant of the aged High-priest Eli, giving him all the help he could. It is probable that there were various tents or chambers erected immediately around that in which the sacred furniture was, with the Holy of Holies as the innermost recess, in which were the Ark, and the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubim, and the Cloud of Glory over all. In one of these tents old Eli is likely to have lived, and in the same tent or in another near it, so as to be within reach, his youthful attendant slept. I can-

not but think that Samuel was a truly godly boy long ere this. I think the notices about him—"ministering unto the Lord," and "growing before the Lord," and being "in favour with the Lord"—all go to prove that. There seems every reason to think that this "ministering child" was a true believer and servant of God. So that, while my first remark has especially to do with careless, unconverted children, I do not at all regard this passage as setting forth Samuel as an unconverted child, and giving an account of his conversion and of God's calling him to Himself. In his case, it was rather a call to service—to difficult duty; and if we were to keep close to our text, and learn only what it strictly teaches, we should be taught here how God calls even children to duty of a difficult kind, and makes them able and willing to do it. I am anxious, however, to call your attention to something other than and beyond this.

The first lesson I wish you to learn, is from Samuel's SLEEP.—The night was far advanced. The golden candlestick with its seven lamps, in the Holy Place, had not yet gone out, as it usually did about the time when the morning began to dawn. Its light shone on all the sacred things. Within the curtain was the Mercy-Seat with the marks of the blood, sprinkled on it on the great Day of Atonement for the taking away of sin; and there was what was called the "Shechinah," or the Cloud that indicated the special Presence of Jehovah. That night God was present in a special

manner. He was near to Samuel. But to Samuel it was as if none of these things had been; he was all unconscious of them,—for he was asleep.

Now, that sleeping boy was just a picture of what many boys and girls among ourselves are, in a different sense—asleep—spiritually asleep, for that is what I mean—that is the sleep to which my first remark refers. For young people may be as wide-awake as you are just now,—all eye and ear—all on the alert,—and yet, in regard to God and salvation and all Divine things, they may be asleep. Let me try to explain what I mean.

There is, 1. The Sleep of Carelessness.—Some mothers tell me about their boys, that they are not bad-hearted. and that what they have to complain of, is not so much want of heart, as want of thought. They never seem to think. And the consequence is, everything goes wrong. I cannot tell how bad, how dangerous that is, what damage it has done-want of thought. Sometimes I see young people sitting with a book before them, but evidently they are not reading it-their eyes have a vacant look-they never turn over the leaf. If, without their knowing it, the book could be turned upside down, it would be all one. If I could slip in a piece of paper before them, telling them that the house was on fire, or that some beloved friend was dead, or that some evil beast was about to spring upon them, it would make no difference. Though their eyes are open, their minds are asleep. It is the sleep of carelessness.

Some young people go to church who never listen to

what is said,—who never hear what is said. They hear a kind of noise—the sound of a voice, but they never think of what it is saying, so that if some day the preacher were to begin to speak Greek or Hebrew, or some other strange language, they would be no losers. When they are asked for the text, they never heard it. When they are asked about some remark that was made specially to them, they literally never heard it. And though their eyes were never closed, they were as really asleep as if they had been,—it was the sleep of carelessness.

I very much fear there are many young people who never think about God, or the soul, or their pressing danger, or the way of salvation. They may be diligent at their lessons, seeking to take and to keep the highest place in their class; they may be active at any work they undertake—clever and handy; there may be none so expert as they, at their different games—things all very good in their way; but, never once thinking they have a soul to be saved, never once asking "What must I do?"—careless about the Bible, careless about any book or conversation of a serious kind, careless about the one Saviour, may they not be said to be asleep? Alas! this sleep of carelessness is the ruin of thousands.

2. There is what I might call the Sleep of Sin.—This is in some respects worse than the other. Some of us fall, more than others, under the power of certain sins—what we call our "besetting sins," which get the upper hand of us,—bad habits of various kinds to which we

give ourselves up, and of which we are more or less the slaves. Now, these are not only bad in themselves. but they are dangerous in the way of deepening the spiritual sleep of which I have spoken. You may have seen people who have been ill and could not sleep. Their cough, or breathing, or pain in some part of the body, drove sleep far away. Then they got what was called a "sleeping draught." At first, it only made them more restless and uneasy, but it was repeated again and again, till at length there the invalid lay, sleeping for hours, as soundly as a little child. Now that is one of the effects of sin, on the conscience and heart. It has a drowsy effect. It makes people sleepy. At first, conscience is uncomfortable, uneasy, and they think they will never do the wrong thing again. But when the sin is repeated time after time, conscience becomes quiet, the heart gets hard, and at length there is sound sleep, so that nothing frightens, nothing alarms. Some of you who feared once, don't fear now. Some of you who had tender hearts once, have hard hearts now. Some of you who once thought about God, and had a desire to be saved, have no such thought or desire now. You are in the sleep of sin.

3. There is the *Sleep of Security*.—*Security* does not mean *safety*. It means the *sense of supposed safety*, and is sometimes the most dangerous state of all. I can suppose you to be where there is scarlet fever, and you are afraid of infection, and try to keep as far as possible out of the reach of danger. And so you go elsewhere,

and fancy all is safe, and take no care, while, close beside you, small-you, or some other languages is ease, is raging. Your state is one, not of an in, but of automp. Or you are at the seaside, wading in the shallow water and amasing yourself, when the tale comes in and surrounds you. Full of feat, you tush to a sandbank, and make the nationest escape from the name rout amasement, not nothing that all tound and tound the water has been flowing, so that, unless they put off with locats from the slatte and come to the rescue, there is no possibility of your being saved. There was the reverse of safely, but there was security.

There may be something corresponding to this with us. Come per una me per alia in diarrae in dipun pur souls. Our sins came un before us. We thought we should be lost. And then we med to be "good." as we called in. We gave un some of our evil ways. We learn to be more numerical about soring our cravers, and learning off verses or charters of the Toole. and doing what was right, this we thought cursolices very good miletin. And though no had never train ter orred of our sin or come to Carist, bad never been washell in His blood, had never given our bearts to Him. we thought there was no fear of us now. There may he some such line trail, self-lineaus Plantsees among those whom I address. They are not are. they are only source. They are wrapt in the along of 11.74

Now, all this is very dangerous. Look at that coalcarter, sitting on his cart sound asleep, the wheel just about to come against a great stone or beam that is lying in the way. Look at that man, sitting with his feet over the parapet of a bridge 130 feet high, and look—he is nodding, fast asleep! There is a house burning: they have got long ladders to get the people down, and many mothers and children are in safety. But in you room lies a sleeping child: no one sees him or knows he is there, and though the top of a ladder reaches the window, it brings no deliverance to him. There is a man lying under the shade of a tree by a river side, screened from a burning sun; but see! twisted round the tree is a huge serpent—it is raising its crested neck and shooting out its fangs, just about to dart at its victim. Oh! if he would but make a plunge into the stream, but—he is sleeping! In all these cases there were other dangers; but the greatest danger of all, the one most to be dreaded, was the sleeping.

Dear young friends, all this is your very case. Yours is the danger of having sinned, and being unpardoned, unreconciled to God, with the only means of safety unheeded, and with a long eternity before you unprepared for, and you are asleep. If these others had been but awake, they might have escaped from the danger; and if you were but awake, you might escape, but what can be worse than this—you are asleep?

II. God's Awakening Call. — In Samuel's case,

a voice called to him, while he slept, that made him start—"Samuel!" and again and again it called, "Samuel!"—till, at the fourth time, it is said, "The Lord *came*, and *stood*, and *called*, 'Samuel, Samuel!" so that he could not but be up and listen.

There are various ways of awaking sleeping people. Sometimes a call will do it; sometimes a gentle tap at the door; sometimes a loud knock. When a workman wishes to make sure of being at his work in time, in the dark winter mornings, to avoid being fined, or when one has to start by an early train, he gets the policeman to ring his bell, and ring again, till he sees the window lighted up, or gets the assurance, "All right!" Or when you have arranged to have an early bathe or a morning walk, or a long day's fishing, your companion, who can awake at any hour he wishes, throws a handful of pease or barley or small gravel at your window, and up you start. Or there is an alarum on a little shelf, close to your bedside, set so as to ring at a certain hour, and first the whirr and then the rapid stroke arouse you. And just so, God has many ways of awaking the sleepers of whom I spoke. Let me speak of some of the ways in which His awakening call comes to sinners.

1. There is God's call in the Word.—This is what most, and most effectually, He uses. It is the very voice of God: as much His voice as when He called, "Samuel, Samuel!" It may be some chapter of the Bible, a Bible story, a verse, a single word: "Except

ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." "We must all appear before the judgmentseat of Christ." "The wicked shall be turned into hell." "Lost!" It may be some word from the pulpit, some earnest appeal from a parent or Sabbath-school teacher or friend, the reading of some book or tract, some interesting story or striking setting forth of the sinner's danger and of the way of salvation through Christ, a text on a tombstone in a cemetery or churchyard, or an illuminated card sent as a present from a distance, or a letter from some old school-fellow, or the story of God's dealing with some neighbour or acquaintance and the word that was used for that friend's conversion:-I cannot tell all the ways in which God's call comes, through the word. Strange and unlikely messages have proved words of awakening to some, rousing the sleeper thoroughly out of his slumbers. Often it is the simple story of Jesus' love, -His coming and dying for sinners. It is told of one of the earliest Moravian missions to the heathen, that all the missionaries' appeals otherwise, failed to touch any heart or conscience, till one day the Story of the Cross was told and the love of Jesus set forth, and then every eye was fixed, and many were in tears:-the awakening was thorough and complete. The three words, "Dieu vous aime"-(God loves you) -addressed to a gathering of sinners in the gay capital of France, have awakened hundreds. It is good every way to have to do with the Word. "Is not My Word like as a fire, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?" "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

2. There is God's call in Providence. - Many things that occur around us are made the means of awakening us out of our sleep: -illness, the death of those we love, some accident, some pressing danger or narrow escape, death staring us in the face and suggesting the thought that any moment we may have to stand before the great Judge. Many of the occurrences that are taking place around us from day to day, are no less than voices from God, fitted and intended to awaken us. The burden of their cry is "Awake! awake!" We do not need, and we must not look for, any miracle, -any actual voice speaking to us from heaven, -- any strange and startling vision. It is not thus that God speaks. But in such ways as we have just described, He knocks loudly at our door, disturbing our slumbers, and bidding us flee for our lives.

This is the object I have in view to-day,—to awaken yeu,—to whisper into your ear that there is danger, and that it is high time to awake out of sleep. No one awakes of himself. Satan awakens none. It is God who is the Great Awakener. It is God's cail that alone can arouse. It is the Holy Spirit, using the Word and using Providences, who opens the sleeper's eyes, and shews him his danger, and leads him to seek deliverance. I cannot awaken you, and yet if God would use me, fain I would. True, He does not name you, as He

named Samuel, but none the less does He mean you. It is as if every one of your names were in the Bible, and I were to read out of it God's message personally to you,—"John, Thomas, Mary, Susan, Andrew, Annie,—I have a message from God unto thee!" "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

JII. THE LYING DOWN AGAIN.—In Samuel's case, this was all right and good. He was an unusually dutiful child. Whenever he was called, up he sprang, and that again and again.

In the case of most, the *lying down again* is fatal. You have seen it of a morning. I shall suppose you have to be at school by nine o'clock. You are called at half-past seven. The first tap at your door awakens you. Your only chance lies in springing out of bed at once. If you resolve just to lie five minutes longer, or if you get up and go to bed again, as some young people do, it is all over with you. You may lie till the clock strikes nine, and land yourself in difficulty or disgrace. The second sleep is likely to be sounder than the first, and to lie down again, when once awakened, is of all things the most foolish.

Sometimes, when God awakens, and there is much anxiety and fear—a desire to be saved, and a willingness to do anything to get salvation—when the remembrance of past sin disturbs, and we seem on the very point of doing what Jesus asks, "My son, give me thine heart,"

there is a "lying down again." We get quit of our anxiety and fear, and try to throw off our good impressions, and are ashamed to have been so much concerned, and think it unmanly to care for such things, and give up our reading and our praying, and think there will be time enough afterwards for attending to these things, till at length we get back to our old way again. Friends often say to us, "Go, lie down again:" not that they would do us any harm, but, like Eli at first, they do not know that the voice that is calling us is the voice of God. It was afterwards that it was told, "And Eli perceived that THE LORD had called the child." Our own hearts often say, "Go, lie down again;" for they do not wish to be disturbed. Satan always says, "Go, lie down again;" for he does not wish us to be saved. And many yield to the temptation. Many young people do so, as well as many who are not young. And how many such have never been awakened again! How many have never opened their eyes again, till they opened them among the lost! I do not say that God never gives His awakening call but once; were it so, many of us had been sleeping yet. He gave Samuel four calls; and many He has called and awakened oftener than that. But it is never safe to count upon more than one call; it is never safe to neglect the first. That was what Lot's wife did; and she never got another chance. God's call came to her: she was awakened; she was almost saved, but she "lay down again;"-that was what her one backward look

amounted to; and she slept, never to awake more. Better never to have been called or awakened at all, than to lie down again, to be called no more.

There may be some awakened, anxious, seeking souls among those whom I am addressing now. Beyond all question, God has been calling them. As in Samuel's case, He may be said to have "come, and stood, and called." They are not far from the kingdom of heaven. But if there is not a speedy fleeing to Christ and closing with Him, the next ten days may decide the matter, and decide it for ever. The Christmas holidays or the summer vacation may be coming; some may be going to distant homes or to visit friends, and there may be parties and entertainments that may take away the heart; and by the time these days are over, the "lying down again" may be an accomplished fact; and there may be others than Lot's wife to be sadly remembered,—to be held up as warnings to others. It is always dangerous to tamper with God's call, by disregarding it altogether, or by putting off the answering of it till some other time.

IV. God's Call Recognised and Answered.—All the three earlier times, "Samuel did not yet know the Lord." He thought the call was but Eli's, and again and again he went to him, saying, "Here am I, for thou didst call me." But at length he recognised the voice that spoke, and was ready with the answer, "Speak, for

Thy servant heareth." That meant more than merely that Samuel was prepared to listen to what the Lord should say. It meant that too, but it meant also that he was ready to do the Lord's bidding, to follow His leading, to act as entirely His. And then followed the first of a series of wonderful revelations, and Samuel was installed as God's prophet to Israel.

Now God is calling you,—to awake, to listen to His voice, to be reconciled to Him, to confess yourselves guilty and flee to Tesus to save you, seeking peace and cleansing in His blood, taking that Saviour to be yours who has died in the room of sinners, that He might make their sins His own, and bear all that should have come on them, so that God's wrath and curse and hell should no more be their portion. He calls you to all this. He calls you through me at this hour. There can be no doubt about it. He is very near to some of you. It is true now as it was then, "And the Lord came, and stood, and called." He has come. He is standing. He is calling. "Behold I stand at the door, and knock; if any one hear my voice and open the door, I will come in." What treatment are you going to give Him? What is to be your answer to Him? Is it to be, "Go thy way for this time"? Is it to be, "I pray thee have me excused"? Or is it to be, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth. Here am I, to do or to be what Thou wilt. I give up my heart to Thee. My desire is to be a sinner saved by grace. and then to be a vessel sanctified to Thy service "? Let us go to God as Samuel went to Eli, "Here am I, for thou calledst me." "Speak, Lord. Tell me more. Let me know Thy will. Shew me Thyself. Make me altogether Thine. Do with me as seemeth good in Thy sight. Here am I, send me."

> Behold! a Stranger's at the door! He gently knocks, has knock'd before, Has waited long, is waiting still; You treat no other friend so ill.

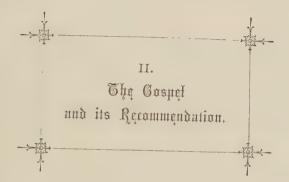
Oh lovely attitude! He stands With melting heart, and laden hands! Oh matchless kindness! and He shews This matchless kindness to His foes.

Rise, touched with gratitude Divine; Turn out His enemy and thine, That hateful, hell-born monster, Sin; And let the Heavenly Stranger in.

Admit Him, ere His anger burn; His feet, departed, ne'er return! Admit Him; or the hour's at hand, When at His door denied you'll stand.

Praner.

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, we thank Thee for Thy awakening call. We thank Thee that Thou dost not leave Thy wayward, wandering children to themselves, but carest for them, and followest them, and speakest to them with a Father's loving voice, that Thou mayest win them back to Thyself. We thank Thee for Thy call in Thy Word. We thank Thee for Thy call in Thy Providence. Open the sleeping eyes that they may see. Unstop the deaf ears that they may hear. Touch the dead heart that it may feel. Awaken those of us who are in the sleep of carelessness. Awaken those of us who are in the sleep of sin. Awaken those of us who are in the sleep of security. Guide the awakened to Thyself. Shew us ourselius:-our sin, our need, our danger. Shew us Throal:- Thy grace and love in Jesus. Wash us in His precious Blood. Hide us in Him as our Refuge. Lord. save us; we perish. O that we might live before Thee! Awaken all whom we love, and cause them to hear Thycall. By Thy Word and Spirit, work in their hearts and in ours a spirit of trust, and love, and obedience. Fit us for all Thy will and service here, and for Thy glory hereafter. And to Thee, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, One God, shall be all the praise of awakening us, and calling us, and saving us. Amen.





2 How high was His seat, His glory how great, When sitting on yonder bright throne! The object above Of wonder and love, The object of worship alone.

3 But see from His place, In infinite grace

He comes, and appears here below; He leaves all His store, And stoops to be poor,

Submitting to want and to woe.

4 No love is like His,

By that of a mother or friend: What tongue cannot teach,

What thought cannot reach, 'Tis love without measure or end.

5 To Jesus alone, Who sits on the throne, Be glory, dominion, and power:
To Jesus be given
All honour in heaven,

By angels and saints evermore.



OMETIMES we who are Christ's ministers are sent for, to visit those who are in anxiety about their souls, or they come to see us.

Some of these are almost in despair, and fear they shall never be saved, they have been such sinners. In such cases, we like to stand aside, and let *God* speak rather than *man*. Especially when we part, we like to give them some word from God's own Book, as better than anything we can say, and more likely to be helpful to them. We seek to leave with them some text, with as much of the gospel in it as possible, in the hope that the Holy Spirit may use it for their salvation. What word, do you think, would be suitable at such a time?

Sometimes we are sent for in haste, to see some dying man, or woman, or child. These are always anxious times, especially if we do not know much about the person, or have reason to fear that he is not one of

Christ's people, and so is not prepared for death. As we hurry along the street, it may be at dead of night, we cry to God to teach us what to say, and to send a word by us to the dying one. Then, most of all, we would stand aside and let God Himself speak, for then, more than at other times, we know there is no word like His. It is sad to have put off the great business of life till then. Perhaps there is not strength enough to listen to any lengthened statement, and if we can lodge one text of Scripture in the mind, one short weighty sentence, with as much in it as might lead a soul to rest on Jesus, we are thankful, and come away hoping that even at the last hour,—though it is far from being the best,-some glimpse of light may break in, amid the darkness of death. Oh, we are eager to get a good word then! What text would you give to a dying brother or sister? What word would do for you at such a time, when, ill as your body was, you were in greater distress about your soul, the one all-absorbing question being, "How shall I appear before a just and holy God ?"

I might give you such passages as these:-"The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There is another, that has been a blessed word to many, alike when healthy and strong, and when sickness came and they were about to die, which you will find in I Timothy i. 15:—

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

There are two great heads into which this text divides itself—the Gospel, and its Recommendation. I. The Gospel: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief;" and, II. The Recommendation of it: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." I. The Gospel,—which tells of these three things: 1. a divinely-appointed Saviour; 2. the mission and work of the Lord Jesus; 3. the objects of His care and love. II. Its Recommendation; 1. it is true; 2. it is trustworthy; 3. it is all-important; 4. it is worthy of all welcome.

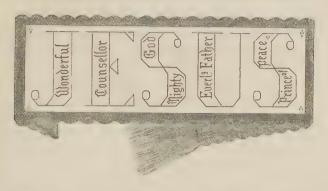
I. The Gospel.—It were well that sometimes we inquired into the meaning of the words we use, which have become so familiar and commonplace to us, that we lose much of the benefit which we might get from them. Gospel is one of these words. It means Good News. Here is a man ill; the word that tells him how he may be cured of his disease, is <code>gospel</code>,—good news. Here is a man miserable; the word that tells him how he may get the heavy load removed from his heart and

be made truly happy, is gospel,—good news. Here is a man starving, he has not had a meal for days; the word that tells him how food may be procured, is gospel,good news. Here is a man dying of thirst,—one of our colonists,—with abundance of food at hand, but not a drop of water; the word that tells him that among these bushes there is a refreshing spring, is gospel,—good news. Here is a man stricken with poverty, in utter beggary and want; the word that tells him where he may get money to supply all his wants, is gospel, -good news. But none of all these is the Gospel, the Good News. There is something better than any of them all. You have it in a verse of one of our hymns,—

> "Oh, I have got good news to tell-My Saviour hath done all things well, And triumphed over death and hell. That's the news! That's the news!"

It is called the Gospel, as if there were no Gospel, -no Good News but itself. It claims to be THE BEST NEWS. Such is our text, and that because it tells about three things:-

1. It tells of a divinely-appointed Saviour.—It tells of "Christ Jesus," and there is Gospel in the very name. I have spoken of words and names being turned to small account, as compared with what they well might be. Take the name we have here. I have a beautiful book-mark, with the inscription, taken from Isaiah ix. 6:-



But I am not going to make up anything of this kind for you. I do not need to put more into the word than rightly belongs to it. The first preaching of the Gospel was very much the making known and holding up of this name to men. Hear it, as announced to the shepherds at Bethlehem: "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a SAVIOUR-a JESUS-which is CHRIST the Lord." That was the announcement made by heavenly messengers to these waiting shepherds. Such good news was it, that we are told there was forthwith a multitude of the heavenly host joining in the song, and praising God for His unspeakable gift in these words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" In the early Church, they were in the habit of speaking about "THE NAME." It is told of the Apostles, after they had been put in prison and beaten,

because of their bold witnessing for the Lord Jesus and proclaiming of the Glad Tidings, that "they departed from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name" (Acts v. 41). In the remarks which I am now making, I have specially in view my younger readers; and yet, in connection with these simple things, there is much for all to learn. Take this word "Jesus," which is just the Hebrew word for "Saviour." There is one who has been awakened, after a lifetime of carelessness, and worldliness, and sin. Through the teaching of the Holy Spirit by the word, he has come to realize his condition as a lost sinner, and his first question is, "What must I do to be saved?" All his efforts come to nothing. The more he strives to get out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, the deeper he seems to sink. I preach the Gospel to him. I tell him I know of One who can meet his case, and do all he desires and needs. He asks, But will He save me ? can He ? and I say, Yes, because His name is Jesus, -- Saviour.

It was customary, long ago, for children to get their names on account of some particular meaning which these names had. Thus, you have Hannah naming her son "Samuel,"—that is, "Heard of God." "Because," she said, "I have asked him of the Lord." So you find Abraham calling his son "Isaac,"—that is, "Laughter;" "for," said Sarah, "God hath made me to laugh, so that all who hear shall laugh with me, for I have born Abraham a son in his old age." And you have Noah's

father calling his son "Noah,"—that is, Rest or Comfort; "Because," said he, "this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." And when the Son of the Blessed comes, the Only-Begotten, the Well-Beloved, His Father names Him "Jesus, because He shall save;" so that the very announcement of the name of Jesus is gospel, because it sets forth a Saviour,—a Divine One, whose work it is to save.

I thank God for that Name. I have sometimes ventured to compare it to what we are all familiar with, —the sign-board above a shop-door, telling what is to be got there; or the name on the door of a lawyer or physician, telling what men may expect there. A sick man sees the doctor's name on his door, and applies to him without hesitation. He says, "The man is a physician, a doctor; that is his profession; he is there for the very purpose of receiving and curing the sick and dying, and I have a claim on his services which he cannot, dare not, refuse." And so, here is One who has His name, as it were, on His door; His profession, His business described in His very name,-"Jesus." It tells His occupation,—the Saviour; so that wherever salvation is needed, wherever there is a lost sinner, wherever there is a sense of need and of danger, and a desire for life and heaven, that lost one may say, "This is the place for me." We must not stop short at the minister's door, or the Sabbath-school teacher's, or any but His. Everything

depends on going to the right person for the right thing,—to the doctor for advice, to the druggist for medicine, to the baker for bread, and to Jesus for salvation. Many go wrong here. They do not go to Jesus, and their conduct is just as foolish as if they were to go to an ironmonger for bread, or to a shoemaker for medicine. People would say they had gone to the wrong place. And so I would say to any who are desiring to be saved, and are seeking salvation anywhere else than from Jesus, "You have made a mistake. You have gone to the wrong place. Don't you see the wrong name is above the door?" The very head-quarters for salvation,—the only place where it can be found,—is where you read the name which is above every name—Jesus! No wonder that we sing,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"

No wonder that we so often repeat the words, "Come to Jesus." Dear young people, have you been seeking salvation from Him? He is not a mere *Helper*, but, as His name signifies, a *Saviour*. Where He does anything at all, He does the whole work of salvation.

But He is also spoken of as the "CHRIST," that is, the Anointed One. Let us go back to the olden times again. There is one who has been guilty of some sin, which lies heavy on his conscience and heart. He takes the prescribed offering, a lamb, and goes with it to the priest, that that lamb may suffer and die for him, as his sacrifice, his substitute; and when its blood

is shed, his sin is atoned for and put away. But the question comes up, "Is he a right priest? Has he a divine commission?" Yes; because he is "anointed," the holy oil was poured on him, setting him apart to the holy office; and as he is an anointed priest, there is no cause to fear. Or take another case: a crime has been committed, and the offender is sent to the king, who alone can give pardon for such an offence. The pardon is given; the man hears it from the king's own lips. But here, too, the doubt arises, "Has he a right to give it? Is he commissioned to grant a pardon? Is he the real king? Will the pardon stand?" Yes; because the holy anointing oil was poured on him, which marks him out as the God-anointed king. Now, Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One; like other kings and priests, consecrated and set apart in God's own appointed way, by the pouring of the holy oil upon Him, so that He may be implicitly trusted, alike in His offering the sacrifice and granting the pardon. If you ask, "Has He the right to forgive—to save? May I rest satisfied with what he does? Will it stand good?" I answer, Yes, for His God-given name is not only Jesus the Saviour, but also Christ the Anointed!

And like other great official persons, He carries his credentials with Him. When our Queen and her Government send an ambassador to represent them, in some matter of State, in a foreign land, the person sent is called a "Plenipotentiary." He is empowered by the Queen and the Government which he represents, to act

for them and do whatever may be necessary, so that what he does is binding on them as if they had done it themselves; and his "credentials" must be produced. to shew that he is what he professes to be, and has the power which he professes to have. So it is with the Lord Jesus Christ. When He came to make peace between God and men, He brought His credentials with Him, to shew that He was the "Sent of God." Prophecy wonderfully fulfilled:—He points to that as a part of His credentials. His marvellous birth, His wonderful character, His holy life, the descent of the Spirit at His baptism, His miracles, His moral miracles most wonderful of all, His words of Divine wisdom,—these are His credentials, proving that Jesus is the Christ. Men are calling in question the Christ-hood of Jesus now-a-days. They will let us speak of Jesus as a model man, as a perfect man, but not as the Christ, the Anointed, the Divine Man, and so we need to fall back on the "credentials" still. The work done in the mission-field abroad, and among the heathen at home; wonders of grace to be seen among ourselves, men becoming new creatures, old things passing away, and all things becoming new,—miracles more wonderful than the bringing of Lazarus out of his grave, or the making of the lame to walk, or the deaf to hear, or the blind to see, or the dumb to speak,—such are the Lord's credentials in these latter days, that prove Him beyond all question to be the Christ. Men make many saviours to themselves. but none of them can be called "Christ." There are

many things which they make their "Jesus," but they are not real saviours. There is only the one Anointed One, and of Him our text speaks—"Christ Jesus." I commend to you this first part of the Gospel message, the news of a real and divinely-appointed Saviour, who may be thoroughly trusted, who never deceived, who never failed, and who never will.

2. It tells of the Mission and Work of Christ .--"He came into the world to save sinners." By His "mission," I mean His being "sent," His coming on His great errand of mercy and love. "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Christ Jesus came into the world." What a word of wonder is this! "Came into the world!" I have been in one of our Highland cottages, and have had the place pointed out where our Queen has sat. There is a sacredness about the spot that can hardly be told, so that you scarcely wonder that some of our humble Scottish peasants have said, "None shall ever sit on that seat again!" You can fancy the mingled pride and enthusiasm with which they tell of the condescension of the greatest sovereign in the world visiting their lowly dwellings. "She came into this humble cottage of mine!" And yet what was

that to this-"Christ Jesus came into the world"? We are told of one of our kings, when out hunting, having suddenly disappeared. He is sought for everywhere, and when at last he is discovered, what a sight! In a cottage, on the coarse floor beside the bed of a humble invalid, the king kneels and prays! It is an event not to be forgotten as a wonder of condescension. And yet what was that to this -"Christ Jesus came into the world"! There is a lazar-house for the reception of lepers in all the stages of their dreadful disease. No man who enters comes out but for burial. One of these good, devoted men, the Moravian Brethren, has his heart filled with compassion for the sufferers, and with the desire to point them to Christ and to heaven; and knowing that he bids a life-long farewell to all outside, he cheerfully enters, and the door closes, shutting him up in a kind of living grave. You say, What a marvel of love and pity! And yet, what are all these as compared with this-"Christ Jesus came into the world"? Think of what He came from. Think of the manner of His coming. Think of those to whom He came. Think of Him as the Babe of Bethlehem, the Child Jesus, the Man of sorrows, the dying Redeemer. Look at all the circumstances of His life, and labours, and sufferings, and death; and what a wonder is this-" came into the world"! May I not speak of the tidings of the Mission of Jesus as a part of the glorious Gospel?

And then, in regard to the work which He came into

the world to do, notice the words—"to save sinners"! Most wonderful of all! Strangers, enemies, rebels,these are some of the descriptions that you have in the Word of God of those whom He came to save. Look at such a list as you have in the 9th and 10th verses of the chapter from which our text is taken, and at similar catalogues elsewhere (1 Cor. vi. 9-11; Eph. ii. 12, &c.) -dead in trespasses and sins, -afar off, alienated, and enemies in their mind by wicked works; and is it not good news to be told-"Christ Jesus came into the world to save" these? I speak of this as the Gospel. It has proved good tidings to many a weary soul. In coming to close quarters, alike with old and young, I find difficulty in getting them persuaded that they have any interest in the invitation, the promise, the command, warranting them, entitling them as they are, and on the spot, to accept the Divine offer of mercy. And yet, that word "sinners" is an invitation to any man, is a warrant to any man, to come and be saved. All the warrant the sinner needs is, that as a sinner God bids him come to and accept the Lord Jesus as a Substitute and Saviour. That has sufficed for others, and it is enough for you. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Does any one still ask, "But will He save me?" I answer once more, Yes: it was just the like of you whom He came to save. Let us go back for a little to the Crimean war. Many are falling by Russian bullets, and still more before a Russian winter. The demand for doctors is most urgent. A distinguished Edinburgh surgeon has gone out,—partly to enlarge his knowledge of military surgery, and still more, to give what help he can to the suffering. The first battle has been fought; and the wounded, and the dying, and the dead are on every hand. I can fancy I see a young Highlander lying, unable to move, suffering intense agony. He would fain have help. His eye follows the doctor as he hurries from man to man, as if unable to get over the ground fast enough, treating friend and foe alike, making no distinction between Russian and Scotchman, and exposing his own life to danger from the attacks of the enemy. When the division to which he belongs moves forward, the devoted surgeon remains among the suffering, labouring on till he himself falls a victim to disease. Would our Highlander, think you, ever dream of saying, "What is the use of my applying to him? Will he care for the like of me?" What! not care for you? Are you not a British soldier? Did he not come on very purpose? Did he not leave his Scottish home, and the friends he loved, and all his bright prospects, to save soldiers; and would he, think you, turn his back on you? How much more may I say the like of Jesus! I can say no better thing of Him, as regards you, than what is said of Him in our text,-nothing that could be more encouraging to you,—nothing more fitted to shut you up to apply to Him at once. Are you a sinner? and will He say you nay when He came into the world to save sinners? He came to purchase salvation with His blood, and then to

give it for nothing—to sinners. He came to save them -completely-for ever-from sin, and wrath, and hell. Oh the good news! And then, as completing this, notice more particularly.

3. It tells of the Objects of His care and love .- I have spoken of these, in the general, as "sinners." We now get a step further forward,-"sinners of whom I am chief," or "first." Perhaps you say, you can fancy Jesus forgiving "little sins," and saving "little sinners," -those who have not done anything very wicked. You cannot so well think of Him forgiving "big sins," and saving "big sinners." And yet, if He had not come to save the biggest of them all, I should have had no Gospel for you to-day. I need hardly say that there are no really little sins or little sinners, even among children. But the worst and most wicked sinner that ever lived, there is a word of hope in our text even for him-the "chief."

Paul says that. It is very much a picture which we have here. He, as it were, summons up before him all the sinners who have ever been,—heathen sinners, infidel sinners, sinners of every kind and degree. He musters them in one great army, and puts himself at the head of them, and says, "sinners, of whom I am chief." Look along the line, the long line, that seems as if it would never end. Go through the ranks. There are those who never heard the name of Jesus, and bow down to stocks and stones. There are those who say there is no God and no hereafter. There are those

who have given themselves up to every kind of evil. There are the rulers and priests who condemned Jesus to die, and the rabble who cried out, "Away with Him! away with Him! Crucify Him! crucify Him!" and those who put the nails through His blessed hands and feet, and the man who pierced His side. Paul looks over them all, and, as if there were none like himself, he says, "I am the chief, the first, the worst of all."

Perhaps you ask, "Why, Paul! how can that be? You were a religious man; you said your prayers; you led an outwardly blameless life. What has put that into your head? Where did you get such a sight of yourself as that ?" I can fancy I hear Paul replying. "I got it during these three longs days when I lay blind at Damascus, after I had met Jesus in the way. It was then that I first got a sight of myself, and I'll never forget it, so vile a sight it was. It was then I first saw my sin, how I had rejected the blessed Saviour, and done despite to the Holy Ghost. Sure there is no sinner like me! And yet He has saved me! Surely after me, He will save any." It is as if, in a rebel army, the commander-in-chief had got pardon, so that every other-sergeant, corporal, private, down to the meanest and youngest drummer-boy-may hope for pardon too. "I obtained mercy," Paul says; and then in the verse that follows our text, he adds, "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me the first," or the chief (for the word is the same as in the text), "Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to

them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting," shewing that his was not a special case, but was meant to be a pattern and encouragement to others. The day may come when you will better understand and value what Paul here says,-when you, too, may get a sight of your own heart and of your past life far different from any you have ever yet had, and thank God that the words were ever written, - "sinners, of whom I am chief!" Evidently Paul never thought of his own wonderful conversion, and of the grace manifested in it, without the deepest emotion. He had often told the wondrous story before; but it never could become a common-place subject. He could not refer to it without his heart filling. I think I see him, now an old man, as he dictates to the friend beside him this letter to Timothy. When he comes to this part of it, how his voice falters, and tears of gratitude and joy begin to flow, till at length, unable to contain himself any longer, he rises from his seat, and bursts out into the glowing doxology that follows:-" Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever! Amen." And what the grace of God did for him as the chief of sinners, it may do for you and me. Surely this is good news.

II. Having spoken of the Gospel itself, I ask your attention now to its Recommendation:—" This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation." You

understand what is meant by a "recommendation." I am sometimes asked to give a recommendation to young people who are in want of situations. That is to sav. they wish me to say what I can in their favour, so that this or the other employer may be induced to take them into his service. And when I speak, in the case of the Gospel, of its recommendation, I mean,-what can be said in its favour, so that you may be induced to receive it. I would now be like a merchant, who, having shewn his goods, begins to tell their good qualities, so as, if possible, to get his customers to make the purchase. I have set my goods before you. I can thoroughly and honestly recommend them. Much of what I have already said, has been in the way of commending the Gospel. I might sav, in general, that you need it, and it suits your case. I shall take up, however, the four points that stand out more prominently in the words of the text, or are suggested by them.

1. It is true.—The great drawback about many things that are very attractive, is, that they are net true. You have met with some entertaining volume. It interests you deeply, and lays thorough hold of your heart. You would rather lose a meal, or an afternoon's play, or an hour's sleep, than lay aside your book. And as you finish the reading of it, with the tear in your eye, and your young heart beating quick, you say, "That is a fine story; a wonderful story. I have seldom read anything like it." Ay, but do you know it is not true: it is just "maie up;" it is all unreal. The persons and

the things of which it tells never had any existence. And the feeling of disappointment is bitter, when you find that you have been imposed upon, and that the whole story is false. Sometimes you have pleasant dreams; you are happy as can be; you have gained some object on which your hearts have long been set; but you suddenly wake up, and it is but an empty dream. Friends who have come home from India have told us, that when passing through the desert, they have seen the "mirage," with its grassy slopes and graceful trees casting their shadow on the lake beside which they seem to be growing, most beautiful to the eve; but it is only a vision, and in a moment vanishes out of sight. But I have this to say in favour of the wondrous Gospel story, that it is true. I wonder if you ever got the length of doubting it? Did you ever, coming to the Gospel as an earnest inquirer, say, "I fear this is too good to be true: it so meets my case, it so satisfies my heart, it furnishes such rest to the weary soul; I wonder if it can really be true." It were better in some respects to be doubters than to be utterly thoughtless, careless, and indifferent, as so many are. A passage occurs in a volume with which many of you are familiar, which often comes into my mind. There is an old man who is often to be found in his humble cottage, with his large family Bible spread out before him, always open at the 14th chapter of John. A youth, who is a frequent visitor, coming in to ask for him, says, "I wonder why you are so often reading

these words, when you know them all by heart; I should be for reading what I did not know." "Well, master," is the old man's reply, "you are right enough, I dare say; but it seems to do me good to get a look at the real words; it helps an old man's faith, for when I see them, I say, There they be, and I cannot doubt them. You see the thought of a mansion in heaven for an old sinner like me, and my Lord going before to prepare it, and coming back to take me to it; why, it is all so wonderful, that if I could not get a look at the words sometimes, I am afraid I should be just doubting again (though I pray that the good Lord would keep me from that); and it is wonderful to come and see them all written there, just when I want to build up my poor faith, for then I know it is not man's word, nor the thought of my old heart, but the word of the Lord that endureth for ever." O, dear friends, do you ever need to go to the Book, and turn up the passage, and say of the words, as you put your finger upon them, "There they be,-wonder of all wonders!-Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners?"

An earnest and faithful minister of Christ was once called to visit a man who was ill with fever, and almost past hope. As he sat by his bed-side, he repeated the words, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." The man woke up, turned round, and looking in his face, said, "Is that true?" The minister took his Bible, opened it at this

passage, and read, "1st Timothy i. and 15th,—This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." The man said, "If that is true, it is enough for me." That moment the fever began to leave him. By and by he recovered, and after living for Christ, and working for Christ, he at length fell asleep in Jesus; and to-day, we believe, he is in glory. It was this simple text that was instrumentally the means of saving him. You may say what he said, "If that is true, it is enough for me." I commend this word to any seeking soul. It is true. It is written in the book. It is enough for you. Its recommendation is, that it is "a faithful saying."

2. It is trustworthy.—Paul tells here that he has tried it, he has made the experiment, and can now recommend it from personal experience. It is as if I were pursued by some blood-thirsty foe, or by some horrid beast of prey, so near that I almost fancy I feel the hot breath of my pursuer blowing upon me. I am fleeing for my life, and have come to a great chasm, hundreds of feet in depth. There is no bridge, except a fragile plank thrown across, which trembles as I put my foot on it. For a moment I stand in doubt as to what I should do. I fear to trust myself on such a slender support, and gaze with dismay upon the abyss below. I look for another way, but there is none. At length I hear a voice from the other side saying, "The plank bears; I have tried it; I have

crossed it; it will bear you; plant your foot firmly on it, and you will get safely across." I look across, and see a man larger and heavier than myself; and when I see him, I pluck up heart, plant my foot on the plank, and cross in safety; and once I am over, I too can testify, The plank bears; I can say, It is trustworthy; I can give others the benefit of my experience: "It has saved me, and now I can recommend it to you." So here, Paul has crossed the plank, and in our text he now calls back to us, "Come away. Don't be afraid. I have crossed: it has carried me, and it can carry you as well." Hundreds have crossed it, and it has never failed. It is only those who have not tried it who speak against it, and would have you to try something else. It has carried the chief of sinners, and it will carry you. It never broke down with one. O try it !--won't you !-and then recommend it to others. Many will bless God to all eternity for this text. Why should not you? This is one of the recommendations of the Gospel, that it has been tried by thousands now in glory, and by thousands more on earth; by those who. feeling the burden of sin and the need of salvation. have taken God's way of it, and have added their testimony to those who have gone before them-the Gospel of Christ Jesus is true,—it is trustworthy,—it is "a faithful saying."

3. It is all-important.— It is worthy of all acceptation, and therefore of all attention. It is no trifling matter. The manner in which you deal with it will decide your



"THE PLANK BEARS."



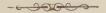
eternity. It is not of importance only to some people, but to all-to you. I see a boy on the street hurrying along in the direction of my home. I see a browncoloured letter in his hand. If he were an ordinary messenger, I should scarcely notice him, and would pass on. But I know what he is, by his uniform, with its bright red facings, and the T on his collar, and the G.P.O. on his cap. The telegram may contain a message that may affect the whole future life of some one. My first thought is,—it may be for me. I cross the road and stop the messenger, and when I find that it brings me tidings that some beloved friend is ill, or that some important interest is at stake, then I am concerned enough. I read it over and over. I can think of nothing else. I turn at once, and give up the business or the pleasure on which I was bent before, whatever it may be.

My dear young friends, I come to you to-day as the bearer of a Telegraphic Despatch—from heaven—from God. It concerns you. It bears upon your dearest interests,—the kind of man or woman you are to be,—the kind of life you are to live,—the kind of death you are to die,—the kind of home you are to dwell in for ever. It is worth being attended to. It should come before everything else. It is as if a thousand voices came across to you from the eternal world,—"attend to it; try it; trust it. With God's help, begin to-day!"

4. It is welcome-worthy.—It is spoken of here as

being "worthy of all acceptation." The word comes as near as possible to our word "welcome," and it is very much as if it were said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all welcome." "Oh that dreary gospel," I think I hear some one saying, "I suppose we must needs have to do with it, or we cannot be saved. It is very much like a medicine. I am ill, I must take it, or I shall not recover, but it is bitter and repulsive." Not so, says Paul; this Gospel is "worthy of all welcome." I might compare it to those letters from beloved friends, which the arrival of the mail from some distant country brings to us. There has been no word for months from some dear one, and when at last the letter comes, how the wife or mother puts it in her bosom, and carries it close to her heart. "Worthy of all welcome," is that letter from the distant one. And that is what Paul says about the Gospel. Or it is like that soldier or sailor son:-there has been no word of him for years, letters have been returned unanswered, the worst has been feared, he has been given up for dead. At length a letter comes, in his own well-known hand, telling that he is on his way home, and naming the day when he may be expected. The day has come; there has been little sleep all night, and early astir, you might have seen his mother a hundred times at door or window looking out for him, and when at last he comes, as she clasps him to her bosom in silence and tears, who shall attempt to describe the scene? Doesn't she say, he is "worthy of all welcome."

or rather doesn't she shew it? There is nothing of gloom or sorrow there. And that is what Paul says of the Gospel. It is the most blessed of all things; the letter that contains it may well be dear to the heart, so that it would not be parted with for worlds. Has it not a good recommendation?—it is true, it is trustworthy, it is deserving of all attention, it is worthy of all welcome. As such, I commend it to you to-day. O think much and often of this text-this precious text. All your life long, remember it. And when you lie down to die, may it cheer your last moments, and help you across the dark river, and sustain you till you get home to glory. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." I commend this gospel to all whom it concerns. Is there no one who to-day will cross the plank, and add his testimony to that of countless others, THE PLANK BEARS! IT IS A FAITH-FUL SAVING!



Phaner.

OUR FATHER in HEAVEN, we praise Thee for sending Thy well-beloved Son into the world, to save sinners, even the chief. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift. Divine Redcemer, we praise Thee for the love that brought Thee from heaven to earth, to suffer and die, that we might be delivered from eternal death. Blessed Spirit, Divine Teacher, we give Thee thanks for any knowledge Thou hast given us of the one Saviour of the lost. One God, accept our praise for the glorious gospel, the message of grace, the offer of mercy to the guilty and helldeserving. Make us feel what it is to be lost. Shew us the evil of sin. Set us free from the snares of Satan, and the entanglements of the world, and all that would keep us back from Thee. Help us, even now, to take Thee at Thy word, to accept Thy gracious offer, to turn to Thee with all our heart. Deliver us from unbelief, and pride, and self-conceit; and make us willing to be saved in Thine own Divine way. Enable those of us who have welcomed the gospel-message. to love and prize it more, and more, and to commend it to others by our holy, happy, useful lives. May the fruits of the gospel so appear in us, as to bring glory to Thee. And send the same Glad Tidings to other lands,—to the Jews, to the Heathen,-and gather from among them a people for Thyself. God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations. We ask all in the name of Jesus. Amen.





- 2 Hark! it is the Bridegroom's voice: Welcome, pilgrim, to thy rest! Now within the gate rejoice, Safe and sealed, and bought and blest! Safe—from all the lures of vice, Sealed—by signs the chosen know, Bought—by love and life the price, Blest—the mighty debt to owe.
- 3 Holy pilgrim! what for thee
 In a world like this remain?
 From thy guarded breast shall flee
 Fear and shame, and doubt and pain.
 Fear—the hope of heaven shall fly,
 Shame—from glory's view retire,
 Doubt—in certain rapture die,
 Pain—in endless bliss expire.





DARESAY you have often been struck, sometimes, perhaps, amused, — with the strange and curious questions which children

ask, alike about common things and about the things of God. They put questions about the soul, and the angels, and the dead, and heaven, which it is not easy to answer, and which sorely puzzle older and wiser people. And sometimes it is better not to attempt to answer them, but to try to turn their attention to something else which is more important. That was the way the Lord Jesus took, when he was on earth, with those who put such questions to Him. One night, Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, came to Him and began to speak about His being a teacher come from God. instead of discussing that, Jesus startled him by saying, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." At another time, when Jesus was sitting on Jacob's Well, speaking to the woman of Samaria who had come to draw water, as He came to

close quarters with her about her sin and her need, she started off with the question as to whether the Jews were right in worshipping at Jerusalem or the Samaritans at Mount Gerizim. But the great Teacher would not be drawn aside from His purpose of benefiting that poor woman's soul, and gave her such a discovery of herself and of Himself, that she forgot her errand, and ran away back into the town, saying, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" At another time, as He was going through the cities and villages, teaching, one of his hearers asked Him, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" He did not answer the question, but He did much better,—He gave the man who questioned Him, and those who stood around, a home-thrust which they would not soon forget. You will find it in Luke xiii. 24:-

"Strive to enter in at the Strait Gate."

Now when any of you ask such questions as that man put to Jesus, the best thing we can do is to follow the Master's example, and press some great subject like this home upon you, as being important above all else, alike for young and old, rich and poor.

The text divides itself into these four heads:—I. The Gate. II. The Straitness of it. III. The need of Entering in. IV. The need of Striving, in order to

enter in. If you would like all in four words, so as to be more easily remembered, take these,—*Gate: Strait: Enter: Strive.*

I. THE GATE.—You have gone to another part of the country to spend your holidays, or to visit friends. There is a noble castle in the neighbourhood, with beautiful grounds, trees and shrubs and flowers, and lakes with swans and all sorts of water-fowl, and other attractions which I cannot describe. You have heard much about the place, and have been told, if ever you are within reach, to be sure to go to see it. But when you go, the very first thing that meets your eye is the gate. That stands between you and what you so much desire to see, and your very first question is, How am I to get in? How is the gate to be passed? Whom shall I get to open it for me? The first thing with which you have to do is—the gate!

Or, there is to be some special treat for children, nearer home. It is a gala-day. Crowds of young people in holiday dress, and all merry and in high spirits as can be, are hurrying along. All are pressing forward to a common meeting-place. You follow the crowd. You would like to get in. As they come up, they shew their ticket of admission, and pass on. And as you look in wistfully after them, your thought is—the gate! the door! How could I get in?

Now, it is just so with other and higher things. As to all that is good in God's house and kingdom here,

and all that is good in God's heavenly kingdom and home yonder—the great question with each of us is, "How shall I get at it? How shall I get in?" The great question is, about the gate—the door. There are two things about which we shall have to inquire in a little, viz.: What is the gate? What is meant by the word, as used here? and to what does it lead? To what is it the way of entrance?

Meanwhile, let me speak of it as a gate or door, leading out or leading in-a door of escape from or of entrance into. Did you notice, not long since, that there had been a fight among some of the wild beasts—leopards and hyænas—in a menagerie. They broke through the partition between one cage and another, and flew at each other, and there they were, holding each other by the throat, the blood streaming fast. The roars were said to be dreadful. The people were terror-stricken. What screaming, fainting, rushing hither and thither! Do I need to ask what you would have been thinking, if you had been there? how you would have been feeling? what you would have said? in what direction your eye would have been turned? "Oh, can we not get out? Is there no door out? Where is the door—the door?" Or suppose a fire were to break out at church or at home. The smoke is blinding and suffocating: the flames are every now and then flashing out; the excitement and alarm are ever increasing. The first thing you think of is the door. Every eye is turned to the door. All make for

the door; and though they are like to be crushed in the press, nothing can keep them back.

Or I shall suppose you wish to *get in*. You require to go to a dispensary for medicine, to a house for shelter, to an hospital for healing, and your first thought is about the gate or door of entrance. Infuriated cattle appear on the street: a gate is, with many, the first thought. It is a time of war, such as has just been in France; soldiers appear, swords are flashing and cannon firing, and you are outside the city. "The gate!" is the general cry, and you never draw breath till you are fairly inside it. There is a storm: the thunder is rolling, the lightning flashing, the wind howling, the rain pelting,—"Oh for some friendly gate or door, at which we might enter!"

Now, we need both the gate out and the gate in. When you have done anything wrong, the first thing most people think of doing, is running away. If you have broken a window, you run away. If you see the policeman coming, you run away. But what, if you were laid hold of and put in prison, and could not run away?—what then? That is our condition! We have broken God's good law, and so we have a wronged, insulted, angry Lawgiver and Judge to deal with. God's wrath because of sin; these sins themselves; our own accusing consciences, telling us we have done wrong, and that we deserve to die; Satan, death, hell:—all these we have to do with, and we cannot get away from any of them all. We are in the prison now; we

cannot make our escape; we cannot get out of God's sight, out of His hand. And what we want is, a gate out, a gate of escape.

And we want a gate in,—a gate of entrance,—into God's pardon, and favour, and friendship, and salvation. We are outside, and we must get in. We want to get away from destruction and death, and to get into safety and life. We want to get away from sin, and the devil, and hell, and into holiness, and happiness, and heaven. In another passage, Jesus speaks of "the way that leadeth unto life." We all so far understand what is meant by the "life." We all, more or less, desire it. And what we want to know about, is the way, the gate, the door. What is it? How is all this to be? It is just another way of putting the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

Now, I might get many answers to the question, "What is the gate?" Some might answer, prayer is the gate, quoting such a passage as that, "Ask and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you;" or, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Some might say, faith is the gate: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Some might say, repentance is the gate: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Some might say, conversion is the gate: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Some might say, regeneration—being "born

again"—is the gate: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." All these are correct, so far as they go. But I believe the best of all answers to the question, "What is the gate?" is, Christ. Christ is the gate. So you find Himself saying: "I am the WAY: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." And again: "I am the Door; by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." And again it is written: "Through Him we have access, or entrance."

Some time ago, I was visiting a friend in another part of the country. On the Sabbath morning, I happened to be in the dining-room before any of the family had appeared. As I stood, with my back to the fire, the door was suddenly opened and thrown back to the wall, and a little boy of four or five, rushing in all out of breath, came up to me, and eagerly said, "Mr Wilson—Mr Wilson, how can Jesus be a door, when He is not made of wood?" I said I should explain it to him by telling him a story:—

"Peter the Great, the Emperor of Russia, had a favourite dog named Lisette. She was a small, dun-coloured Italian greyhound, and very fond of her master, whom she never quitted but when he went out, and then she laid herself down on his couch. At his return she shewed her fondness by a thousand caresses, followed him wherever he went, and during his afternoon nap lay always at his feet.

"A person belonging to the court, having excited the anger of the Czar—I do not know by what means—was confined in the fort, and there was reason to suppose that

he would receive the punishment of the knout on the first market-day. The whole court, and the empress herself, thought him innocent, and considered the anger of the Czar as excessive and unjust. Every means was tried to save him, and the first opportunity taken to intercede in his favour. But, so far from succeeding, it served only to irritate the emperor the more, who forbade all persons, even the empress, to speak for the prisoner, and, above all, to present any petition on the subject, under the pain of incurring his highest displeasure.

"It was supposed that no resource remained to save the culprit. However, those who in concert with the Czarina interested themselves in his favour, devised the means of urging their suit without incurring the penalty of the prohibition.

"They composed a short but pathetic petition, in the name of Lisette. After having set forth her uncommon fidelity to her master, she adduced the strongest proofs of innocence of the prisoner, entreated the Czar to take the matter into consideration, and to be propitious to her prayer, by granting him his liberty.

"This petition was tied to her collar, in such a manner as to be easily visible.

"On the Czar's return from the Admiralty and Senate, Lisette, as usual, came leaping about him; and he perceived the paper, folded in the form of a petition. He took, and read it—'What!' said he; 'Lisette, do you also present me petitions? Well, as it is the first time, I grant your prayer.' He immediately sent a soldier to the fort, with orders to set the prisoner at liberty." *

Now Lisette may be said to have been the man's "door,"—the means of his getting out of prison, and yet she "was not made of wood."

^{* &}quot;Heads and Tales." By Adam White, late of the British Museum.



PETER THE GREAT AND HIS DOG.



I shall try to explain to you how Jesus is the Gate, the Door, the Way. If you had offended some one, and he were to say that he would have nothing to do with you, would hold no communication with you, except through me; that he would not listen to your application for pardon, except as it came through me; that I was the only person to whom he would listen, as seeking help for you, then I would be your "way,"—your "door,"—so far as he was concerned. And just so, I cannot get access to God the Father, except as coming through the Lord Jesus,—in His name,—making mention of Him. He is the only Mediator between God and me.

I shall suppose you to be in prison, sentenced to lie there for months, or years, or for a whole lifetime, on account of some crime or for debt, or, it may be, condemned to death. I offer to take your place and become the prisoner in your stead, undertaking, as your substitute, to lie there for you as long as you should have lain, or to die for you, and you accept my offer, change places with me, and are set free. If you were asked, how you got out, you would say that you got out through me; that I opened the door for you; that I was your door out. Now that is what Jesus is and does. We are in the prison, for debt, for crime; and we cannot pay the debt, we cannot atone for the crime, and so we must die, we must lie in prison for ever, we must suffer the eternal death. And Jesus offers to take our place, to make our debt His, our sin His.

He offers to be our Substitute; and only thus is there any way of escape open for us at all. That is the only door for any man or woman, or boy or girl. It is not your prayers, or knowledge of the Bible, or going to the church, or being baptized, or attending to religious duties otherwise, or being honest, and truthful, and diligent, and kind,-though all these are good and necessary in their own place. None of these are "the Gate," "the Door." No one of these will save you, nor all of them together. Christ as the Substitute taking Him to be your Substitute—it is that alone that can save you. He pays the debt; He does the work; He suffers the punishment; He dies the death; He bears the wrath, the curse, the hell. It is all His doing; and so, when we accept His offer, when we take Him at His word, our salvation is all through Him, —He is the Way, the Door, the Gate.

Your parents cannot save you, however good; nor your teachers and ministers, however earnest; nor any man on earth, nor any angel in heaven. None but Christ, none but Christ! He is the Gate—the only one, by which any sinner can enter into life—into heaven. That is one of His names, one of His precious titles: Christ the Gate—the Gate of Life; the Gate of Heaven!

II. THE STRAITNESS OF THE GATE.—It is called the "strait" or narrow gate. That does not mean, as we have seen, that there is any gate of wood or iron, and that it is

so small that your bodies can hardly get through, push as you will. It just means that the way of salvation is difficult,—is hard,—that entering in by Christ as our door of salvation, our way of life, is, in many views of it, very difficult, though, in other respects, it is most simple, most easy.

I might speak of "the strait gate" in other matters. For instance: You have, in some way, been misbehaving, and you cannot bring yourself to say you have done wrong, to confess your fault, and own yourself sorry for it, and promise never to do the like again. You are shut up in your room. You hear your mother's footstep in the passage. You saw the tear in her eye, as you not only did the wrong, but refused to acknowledge it; and as you hear her at your door, and know that she is waiting there for the needed confession, it is as if a voice within cried out, "Yes; do it!" but your pride, your temper, your high spirit, will not let you, and you don't. It is a "strait gate."

You have acted unfairly to a companion, at play, or in your class. You have won a game in some dishonourable way, or you have gained a place or a prize by copying, or getting others unfairly to help you, or overhearing a whispered answer. And as you see the prize, you say to yourself: "Wouldn't it be so nice to have it to take home wouldn't it make my father's heart glad? It is hard to think of giving it up. And then to own the wrong, to tell what I have done: wouldn't it be dreadfully mortifying? wouldn't I lose caste? wouldn't all cry 'Shame!' on

me? wouldn't they never let it down, and call me mean, low, shabby, thief, liar,—all sorts of names? I cannot face it. I cannot think of it. Conscience says, Do it. God says, Do it. All lovers of fair play say, Do it. And I feel as if I must; but oh! it is hard,—isn't it?" It is a "strait gate." Not long since, at one of our Children's Services, the subject of the lesson was the duty of returning good for evil. Some days after, as the superintendent was walking along the street, a little boy came running up to him and said, "Master! I did yon." "Did what?" "Yon that ye bade us. A laddie struck me, and I had up my hand to strike him back again, but I minded what ye said, and put it into my pocket; but eh! it was awfu' hard!" It was a "strait gate."

All this may give you some idea of what is meant here. It means that the entering in at the gate, the coming to Christ and taking Him as the one way of salvation, is, in some respects, a very hard thing to do. I shall try to shew you, in a few words, how it is so.

r. There must be the *giving up of your* sin.—You cannot come to Christ without this. You must let your sins go. Here is a narrow entrance. A blind man comes up to it with a great bundle on his back. It would let *him* in, but it will not let in his *bundle*. Either he must let go his load, and leave it behind him, or else he must stay outside with it. Now, your sins are just such a bundle. And then they have got such a hold on you,—they so cling to you,—they seem a part of your very self! To give them

up is like leaving an arm behind you, and that is not easy. These dear sins of yours!—who shall tell what the giving of them up is!—forsaking your bad habits, bad companions, bad books,—those silly, exciting, polluting novels, and story books, and tales, which used to have such an attraction for you; renouncing your bad tempers, pride, vanity, love of dress, indolence, resentment, talebearing, selfishness, greed, and such like things. Oh, it is hard to part with these!—it is a "strait gate." Ay, the gate is so strait, that it will not let in one consciously SPARED SIN; and it is often one—just one—that keeps people out. They will not give it up, and the strait gate will not let it through.

I am anxious not to be misunderstood here. We are to come to Christ just as we are, that He may wash our sins away in His precious blood, and deliver us from them, by His Word, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by the constraining power of His love. But the very coming to Him that He may do this, implies, the surrender of these sins, and our avoiding the occasions of them. Let me give an illustration. Not long ago, a kind Christian lady met with a girl of thirteen, a poor little rag-sorter, living in a miserable cellar, among wicked people, sunk in ignorance and sin. She was got to the Sabbath School twice, before she was laid on what proved her deathbed. All was new to her. "Tell me," she said to her teacher, "of Him, that good gentleman that you called 'Jesus!" As the parable of the Prodigal Son was

opened up to her, she said, "Ah, that was just like me! that's good !-- say it again." And then comes the point to which I call attention. Among her other confessions, she said, "I have had a book, too, full of wicked songs, and I have sung them;" and as by a kind of instinct, without any human prompting, this young scholar in Christ's school, felt that it must be given up. "I thought of all this when I came home, and for a long time I felt frightened to go to God; but all at once I remembered about the thief—that poor thief who died with Jesus, you know; and as soon as everybody was fast asleep in our room, I got up; very softly I went over into the corner there by the fire, I took my songbook and tore it into little pieces, red cover and all, though I once thought it so pretty. I struck a match, I burnt it, every morsel, to tinder. Then I said, 'Dear Jesus! I want very much to love you. I want to get away from the devil-please help me! Take away my naughty thoughts-please do, dear Jesus!' I think He heard me-I know He did," she added, with animation. "for I felt somehow different ever since. I am not afraid now-no, not one bit! and I love Him-oh, so much !"*

2. There must be the giving up of your SELF-RIGHT-EOUSNESS—your own *goodness*.—By that, I do not mean that you are to cease to do any good thing that you have ever done,—that you must give up doing good,

^{* &}quot;Just Like Me." See also "Niff and his Dogs," by John Ashworth: and "The Brown Jug," in Dr Spencer's "Pastor's Sketches."

just as you must give up doing evil. But I mean, that you must no more trust to your good-doing than to your evil-doing, as a ground of acceptance with God. At a funeral one day, I heard a minister thank God on behalf of an old saint, that, "by God's grace, she had been enabled to give up self, -sinful self, and righteous self." Now the giving up of sinful self, as we have seen, is difficult enough; but it is not nearly so hard as the giving up of righteous self. "I am so good; I don't tell lies, or pilfer, or swear, or tell tales, or do other bad things. I say my prayers, and read the Bible, and know a great many texts and psalms and hymns, and have my missionary box, and give to the poor, and am kind to my neighbours, and the like." It is difficult to avoid trusting in all this,-to confess that I am weak, ignorant, helpless, hypocritical, worthless, wicked,-to come down to the same level, and be willing to be saved in the same way, as the children in reformatories and prisons, and in the worst homes in the city, and instead of trusting in anything about myself-in any goodness of my own, to trust entirely in Jesus! It is a "strait gate." I spoke of our sins as a great bundle, which the "gate" would not let in with us. I must just say the same with regard to our own righteousness or goodness, in so far as we look to it for salvation. The gate will not let it in either. It cannot go in with us, and we must either stay out with it, or go in without it.

If we might speak of a "ticket of admission," at this

gate, the only one that will be accepted, is that which has nothing written on it but the words,*—

"ADMIT THE BEARER,

A SINNER."

Luke xviii. 13, 14.

3. You must enter in at this gate alone.—Part of the "straitness" consists in the solitariness of it. The crowd do not go that way,-they do not like it. And it is not easy to differ from other people in anything. It is not easy even to wear an article of dress unlike our neighbours. It requires a great deal of courage even to do that. Now, one must be very much alone in entering this gate. Hence one of the difficulties of it. If it were the fashionable way, and were thronged, it would not be so difficult. Even boys, otherwise brave and bold, find it hard to differ from their companions, and enter alone. "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

There are two remarks, however, which I must make

^{*} See "Admit the Bearer.--A Sinner;" Glasgow Evangelistic Tracts, No. 118. See also Major-General Burn's well-known "Dream,"

here, by way of encouragement, and as so far an offset to the straitness of which I have spoken. The first is, that although the gate is *strait*, it is *open—always open*. You don't need to open it: it is open already. I have heard of a mother who, after her prodigal daughter left her home, never locked her door. Night and day she left it on the latch, so that if ever her child should return, at any hour of the day or night, she would never find the door *shut*. So with our Father: He has left this door upon the latch. At any hour at which you may come, you will find it open. It is very strait, but open. There is hope in that. "Behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." It will be shut one day, but it is open now.

The second is, that though the gate is always strait, it is not so strait for children. Children can get in at small openings more easily than older and bigger people can. I often pass, when in the country, a small opening between a gate-post and a stone wall at the entrance to a cricket-field. If I were to try to push through, I could not do it, even if it were to save my life. One day, as I stood at the padlocked gate, a band of little children came tripping along, and one after another went up to the opening, and without difficulty threaded the needle's eye. I could not but think, "how easy it is for children to get in!" So it is here. It is not so difficult for you to enter in at Christ's door as it is for older people. It is not so difficult for you to-day as it will be at this time next year, and the bigger you grow

it will be the harder and more difficult for you to enter. Every year, every day, the difficulty increases. Hence God's great word is—" To-day!" "Now!"

III. The need of Entering in.—It is not enough to know about it, to think about it, to promise, to intend, to resolve. None of all these will do. You must enter in. There is a ship at sea, beating about,—the wind blowing hard, the waves breaking over it. A leak is discovered,—all hands are at the pumps; the water is making; darkness comes on; guns of distress are fired. There are piteous cries for help. At length, yonder is the harbour! The cry bursts forth from a hundred voices, "The harbour! the harbour! Yonder are the lights! Listen! don't you hear the voices?" And yet they may sink in sight of the harbour, at the very mouth of it, almost in, knowing all about the entrance. And next morning it will be all the sadder to see the ship lying at the very harbour's mouth, -touching it,a wreck, and all on board perished. They did not " enter in."

You have been at the Rifle Range. Flags are flying; white tents cover the ground; the band is playing. You have gone out, like other people, to see; and you have wandered into the line of fire. You hear crack after crack of the fast-coming shots; and I am in the marksman's hut, protected by solid mason-work with earth behind it, which no bullet can pierce. I call to you, "Come in; make haste. Run, run; don't lose a

moment!" You stand, looking at me, hearing me; but that does not save you. You are never safe till you have entered in.

In these cases all depends on entering in. And so it is here. Most of you know about the gate, know all about it. Even the very little ones do. They know many texts and hymns that speak about it. Your mothers tell you all about the love of Jesus, the dying of Jesus, the blood of Jesus; and the knowledge is very good. You cannot be too thankful for it; you cannot do without it. But the knowledge will not save you; nothing will save you but entering in. And what is this entering in? It is coming to Christ,—accepting Christ,—believing in Christ,—giving up the heart to Christ,-trusting Christ. The offer does not make Him yours, but the accepting of the offer does. Many people, old and young, who know all about it, never get beyond the knowing, never enter in, and so perish after all,—some at the very door.

IV. The need of STRIVING, in order to enter in.— That is to say, there must be earnestness, thoroughgoing earnestness,—throwing ourselves with our whole heart into it, resolving never to give up, but with God's help to win the day.

I know well how earnest you can be about other things—how you can "strive" alike in connection with your lessons and your games. It brings a kind of awe over me when I see the intense earnestness with which

many of our boys run their races, and brace themselves up for other sports. And yet how little striving there is, in connection with the things of God, which should come first-by a long way first-leaving all else far in the distance. How many boys have never striven so earnestly to be saved, as they have done to win a race or a game at football or cricket! Just fancy that tonight you should be in circumstances of danger, from fire, or drowning, or earthquake, or disease, or murder: how you would strive to save yourselves? Food, dress, lessons, prizes, money, thoughts of what others would think of you,-would any of these stand in the way of your immediately seeking to save yourselves? None of them all. Not one. I am sure of it. "My life," you say, "my life is far before all else! What would anything else matter, if I lost my life?"

And just so you might say, "My soul! my precious soul! my immortal soul! what can be compared to it? What shall it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose my soul?" O what striving there well might be!

You say, "The gate is strait." So it is; but then it is a matter of life and death. One day, when having a ramble among the hills with a party of young friends, we spied a rabbit, and gave chase to it. It was not difficult to catch, and when we took it up it wanted a leg! We supposed it had been caught in a trap, and had either torn itself away and left its leg behind, or (as rats are said sometimes to do) it might have bitten off its own limb. That was hard enough to do, but

then it was to save *life*, and life is more precious than even a limb, and who would not part with the one to save the other?

And now let me ask one or two questions ere I close:—I. Are you striving?—If such earnestness is needful, if the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, if without this there is no hope, no chance of being saved,—what are you doing in order to be saved? Are you STRIVING?

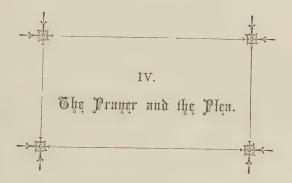
- 2. Are you letting anything keep you back? A man who had climbed up a tree overhanging a river, lost his hold. As he was falling down, he caught hold of a twig, by which he hung. A boat put off for his rescue, and came alongside, just beneath him; but there he still hung, and save him they could not. Their cry was, "Let go the twig, or we cannot save you!" and only when he let go, was salvation possible. Perhaps you are holding by some "twig," some sin, some fancied goodness, refusing to give it up. I would leave this word to ring in the ear of such: "Let go the twig! Let go the twig! Let go the twig! Let nothing keep you back!"
- 3. Are you putting off?—You have no security for to-morrow. No day is yours but to-day. What a bitter thought it will be, that you might have entered in, and you would not, and so are for ever shut out!

Hear the solemn words which follow our text:—
"Many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Why? Because too late. "When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to

the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, He shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from Me!" "Seek ye the Lord, while He may be found."

Pannen.

O LORD, help us now to make confession of our sinfulness before Thee. Our hearts are sinful. Our lives are sinful. We have all like sheep gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way. We would come back to Thee. Pardon our iniquity, for it is great. Create within us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. We thank Thee that there is a way of return. We thank Thee that the Gate is open, and that Thou biddest us enter in. Let nothing keep us back, -no sin, no fancied goodness of our own, no fear of the ridicule of our companions. Give us all courage and holy resolution to press in at once. Just as we are, without one plea, but that Thou bidd'st us come to Thee, O Lamb of God we come! And having entered in at the Gate, help us to press forward in the narrow way. Be the Guide of our youth. Lest any hurt us, keep us night and day. And oh! have mercy on the multitudes who are still outside the Gate of Life. Incline them to enter in. Make use of us for encouraging and helping others to follow and serve Thee, and let ours be the joy of those who turn many to righteousness, and who shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. And all the glory shall be Thine, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.





[plea.

In mercy receive me, for mercy's my The word Thou hast spoken Can never be broken:

Thou know'st I am needy and greatly find rest. distrest. Thou callest the weary to come and

to rest, [ing opprest : Where saints are no longer by suffer-Where joys beyond measure,

And fulness of pleasure, In glory transcendent the conquerors [they bear. The palm of their triumph for ever



N the Canongate of old Edinburgh—that strange-looking, picturesque, long, narrow street that runs from Holyrood Palace up towards the Castle—stands John Knox's house,—the old house in which the great Scottish Reformer used to live. After passing up the narrow stair, one of the rooms into which visitors are shewn, is the Reformer's study; and among other things still preserved in it, is his old arm-chair. I once visited it with a godly minister of the Church of England, who, as he occupied that chair, said with evident satisfaction, "Ay, and John Knox once sat where I'm sitting now! Well, it's strange to think of it." I should not wonder though he breathed the silent prayer, "Oh, to have somewhat of that great and good man's spirit!"

Perhaps I am speaking to some son who carries in his pocket his father's old watch. It is neither very neat nor very costly. It is not made of gold, and most people would think it very old-fashioned, and would not care much to have it. And yet he would not part with it for any money. It was his father's, and he still remembers with what veneration he used to regard it when he was a child,—when he never was allowed to get it into his hands, though, as with all young people, it was a special treat to him to hear it ticking, or to see his face in the clear inside of the lid, as with magic touch it started open. And as he pulls it out of its fob now, he often thinks of the worthy father to whom it once belonged, and sometimes you might hear him saying to himself, "Worthy man! I wish I were like him."

And, doubtless, there are many who, in going back to early days, call up the remembrance of the family worship in their happy home, which had a kind of sacredness about it such as nothing else has ever had. The earnest pleading tones of the morning and evening prayer still ring in the ear, and one petition and another offered then were so written on the hearts of those who knelt around that family-altar, that now when the head of the house is away, you may still hear his children sending up their father's cry,—homely and oldfashioned, in some cases, it may be, -but all the more tender and thrilling to them, and all the more prevailing with God, because it was their father's. Such was the old Covenanter's prayer, so often offered on moor and mountain, "Lord, take the ripe, and spare the green!" Other petitions I could mention, which I know are memorable and sacred to many; and if any one were to exclaim, with a smile, "An old prayer!" it would call forth the earnest answer, "Ay, there is nothing so sacred,—nothing that takes such a hold of me,—nothing that so goes home to my heart,—as the prayers which my father, or mother, or grandfather, or other godly friend, used to offer, long ago!"

Well, it is not about an old chair, or an old watch, but about an old prayer, that I am now to speak. It is as old as the time of *Moses*, for it was his prayer first, and has been well known at the throne of grace ever since. You will find it in Psalm xc. 14:—

"O satisfy us early with Thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days."

We call the Psalms "The Psalms of David," because most of them were composed by him, and yet some of them were written long before his time, and many of them long after. Now, you will notice that the title of this Psalm is, "A Prayer of Moses, the man of God." It is supposed to have been composed during the journeyings of the children of Israel in the wilderness,—probably not long before their wanderings came to a close. And is there not something attractive in the thought that we are sending up from our lips and hearts the very prayer which Israel's great Leader, and God's friend, offered up long ago,—which so many, and especially so many children, have prayed ever since, and which has

often brought down the blessing asked? The verse which has just been read, might be entitled, "The Prayer and the Plea."

I. THE PRAYER: "O satisfy us early with Thy mercy. 1. The *kind of blessing* sought: "Thy mercy." 2. The *measure* of it: "satisfy us." 3. The *time* of it: "early."

II. THE PLEA: "That we may rejoice and be glad all our days,"—present and future joy and happiness.

- I. The Prayer.—Moses was now an old man, and had seen many strange things in his day. He had often been in straits, from the time when his mother committed him, as a weeping babe, to the waters of the Nile and to the good providence of God, down till now. And in his straits, Moses did what David did, what all good men before and since have done, and what we should do now—he cried unto the Lord—he *prayed*. Whenever anything went wrong with him, there was that which might have borne the same title as this psalm, "The prayer of Moses the man of God." How do you think they would pray long ago? What would they need—what would they ask—in those days? We shall learn here.
- 1. The kind of blessing sought: "Thy mercy"—divine mercy. The thousands that had seen the Lord's wonders in Egypt, and had marched up, with flying colours, out of the land of their bondage and through the Red Sea, were fast dying out. As they

journeyed to and fro, amid much to be thankful for, they were ever bringing down God's judgments upon them, now being visited with one trial and now with another, leaving their dead behind them at almost every stage. And when Moses saw how they were melting away,—how their ranks were being thinned,—how they were "carried away as with a flood,"—"cut down like the grass,"—regarding them as sufferers, his cry to the Lord was for mercy. And still more, when he thought of the sin that was the cause of all this,—the open iniquities and secret sins of which they were guilty, and God's wrath because of them,—regarding them as sinners, his cry, yet more earnest, was for mercy.

Now, dear young friends, there is the same need for this blessing in your case that there was in theirs—in both these aspects—as *sufferers* and as *sinners*. There is a boy who might have had a happy home, but, like the prodigal son, he thought he would be better anywhere else, and so he set out to push his fortune in other parts of the world. There seems to be nothing but disappointment awaiting him wherever he goes. He is unfortunate in everything. He loses his earthly all. He is tired and footsore, tattered, and hungry, and as he wanders on, and his strength begins to fail, nobody knows,—nobody notices, nobody cares for, the stranger boy. It is not so much even the weariness or pain that have overtaken his body, as the unhappiness and burden that lie upon his heart. The merry laugh

of other youths,—the cheerful-looking homes which he passes by,—only increase his misery, till at length, almost in despair, he cries out, "Will nobody pity me?" As he sinks down on some door-step, his word is, "Will nobody have mercy upon me?" A lost child, a deserted child, a friendless orphan child, a weeping unhappy suffering child, needs comfort, pity, mercy, of this kind.

Among those who read this book I have no doubt many are unhappy. Perhaps some of you are poor, some are in feeble health, some are orphans, some are friendless and uncared for, some have unhappy homes, and those of you who are the happiest of all, if you were to speak the truth, would confess that many a time you have a sore heart,—you feel as if your young heart would break,-you almost wish you had never been born. You could scarcely say what is the matter with you, and you don't know what would make you happy. I can tell you. It is God's mercy: His love-His pity-His kindness and compassion. To think that He who looked on Hagar and her weeping boy in the wilderness, and said, "What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is," was looking on you: to think that He who was with Joseph in all his troubles was with you: to think that He who provided so wonderfully for His servants in other days would provide for you: and that He who had ever a kind word and a kind look for the sorrowing, had a word and a look of love for you,-

that would comfort you. I know it would. I am sure it would. So that whenever you are unhappy,—whenever there is anything the matter with you,—when your brightest hopes fail, and your best friends die,—this meets your case,—Divine mercy: this should be your cry—"Oh for Thy mercy!" I say this, thinking of you as sufferers. But what shall I say of you as simers? What will meet your case as such?

You have sinned against your father, you have abused his kindness, worn out his patience, brought disgrace upon him, so that he can hardly lift up his head on the street. At length, he can bear it no longer, and, though you are his son, he turns you out and bars his door against you. And when you come to yourself, and see the evil of your ways, and what you have brought upon yourself, as you plead at his door, and wring your hands in your deep distress, what is it that you want? what is it that you ask? It is mercy, mercy! It is to be pardoned, to be forgiven!

Not long since, a woman who had committed a serious crime was apprehended, tried before the High Court of Justiciary, found guilty, and condemned. As the officers were about to lead her back to her cell, a cry of agony burst from her lips, and after she had disappeared, her voice still rang in the ears of the audience. Some who were present that day have often fancied they have heard the echo since,—"Is there nae mercy for me?"

Many years ago, in the sister land of France, a crowd

might have been seen gathered in one of the streets of her capital, looking on a scene, the memory of which should not be suffered to pass away. In a lonesome dungeon lay a prisoner, who, having been accused and found guilty of a political crime, had been condemned to die, and now awaited his execution. There was more than one heart that sighed for his deliverance, and a memorial was drawn up, praying for a remission of his sentence. Earnest above all others was the prisoner's daughter, and, as the likeliest way of securing the desired object, it was arranged that, armed with this petition, she should intercept the Queen as she passed through the city, and make a personal appeal to her on the public street. With trembling heart the maiden set out on this forlorn hope. nerved only by the recollection of her father's danger. The royal party was stopped, the memorial presented, the appeal made as only a daughter could make it, and when the Queen had heard her tale, though her heart beat with womanly sympathy, she could but reply, "Justice must take its course." The last hope seemed doomed to disappointment; but the thought that it was the last, kept the hand that held by it from relaxing its grasp, and forthwith the hearts of the onlookers were thrilled, as the cry burst forth from the petitioner, "Not Justice But Mercy!" The appeal was irresistible, the prayer was granted, and mercy triumphed. The guillotine lost its victim, and the royal clemency gave to France at least one happy home.

Now, this is just what you need to ask. You have sinned against your God and Father; you have been sinning all your days; you have been provoking the God of Love; you have despised and rejected His dear Son, and grieved His blessed Spirit. And whether you think it or not,—whether you feel it or not,—the loving God is angry with you; and if you go on as you are doing, He will soon have to say to you, and will say it, "Depart from me, ye cursed." No wonder that you should be alarmed; no wonder that you should be able to think of nothing else, though it should lie like lead on your heart, though you should be heard crying night and day, "What shall I do? what shall I do?" If I am speaking to any who have been thus awakened, our text has a word of hope for them, -- "Thy mercy," -our text contains the very prayer for them: "Oh for Thy mercy!" It is not the mercy of a Father only; it is not the mercy of a Judge only: it is the mercy of God, which differs from all else. Ah, dear young people, there is an element here that is nowhere else, and the youngest of you may, in some respects, understand it better than even Moses. It has respect to Jesus,—as dying for sin, as a sacrifice for sin, as taking the sinner's place, as saying, "Father, forgive them, for My sake; save from going down to the pit." It is only as coming through Jesus; it is as having our eye fixed on Jesus; it is because Jesus died for sinners, even the chief, that we can ask and hope to receive mercy. Oh, let us make it our prayer, "God be

merciful to me a sinner! Pardon me, receive me, love me, for Jesus' sake!" That is the blessing sought; and it is well worth the having, as we shall see.

2. The measure of it: "Satisfy us."—We have been looking at the nature of the blessing, the kind of it. We shall look now at the measure of it. Our text brings out the fulness of the blessing, shewing that it is abundant, overflowing. There are many strange things in the world; but perhaps the strangest of them all is, a human heart, even a child's heart. Did you ever think of it? Did you ever try to know it? Did you ever pay close attention to it for ten minutes? God's word says, "Who can know it?" Even a child's heart,-small enough in one way, you will say,—is yet the biggest thing in the world. It is bigger than the ocean; for the ocean has bounds, but it has none. It can hold more than anything else; av. there is no possibility of filling it. If the heart were to speak out what it is feeling, its unceasing word would be, "Give, give!" and the more you gave it, the more it would want. How large and capacious it is! How much it desires! How much it can hold! Its capacity all the arithmetic of earth cannot calculate. I might compare it to some of those elastic bags which you have seen, which, the more you put into them, seem always to grow the larger. I recollect, when a boy, of seeing a missionary box, or I should rather say, a missionary barrel, packed,—of helping to pack it. Chair, and table, and floor were all covered with the various articles,—shirts,

and stockings, and trousers, and coats, and waistcoats. and dresses of all kinds, and knives, and scissors, and needles, and pins, and tapes,—I can't tell you all what, to be sent out to Dr Livingstone, in Africa. Where they were all to be stowed away, seemed a hard question. But the packing began; article after article disappeared. It was wonderful what the barrel took in. I recollect of being in it, and jumping on the contents to press them down. And at length the pleasant work was done; and the labour and the gatherings of months, which filled a whole room, were all deposited in that strong cask, which in course of time found its way across the deep, and did good service among the sons and daughters of Africa. I remember we wondered at what that missionary barrel took in; and yet I know what could take in far more, -any heart, any boy or girl's heart that you like to select. You might mention every sort of thing, everything that you have ever wished to have, -- riches, dress, grandeur, jewels, pleasures of every kind; all that money can buy or power procure,-and all would not fill it. Ay, the world would not fill it,—there would still be room for something else. I never knew a heart that was so full, that it could hold no more. I never knew a scholar who had so much learning, that he did not wish any more; or a rich man who was so rich, that he wanted no more wealth; or a man of the world who had had so many pleasures, that he had no desire for more; or one who was so well off, that he was in every respect thoroughly content. There is always a

craving for something that we have not. We never can say, "It is enough!"

There is just one thing that will fill any heart, and that is, God's mercy. When a man has got that, he can say, with Paul, "I have all, and abound." The reason why God has made the heart—even of a child—so big, is just that it might feel empty, and that it might not be filled, except with His own love and mercy. There are some locks which almost any sort of key will open; a crooked nail will do it. But there are others so intricate, that no key in all the world will open them but their own. When we have a "Chubb's Patent" lock on our door, we can leave the house without fear. No key will fit the lock but this:—



And just so, the measure of the blessing sought in the prayer of our text, and the measure of your heart and mine, exactly agree,—they were made for each other,—and, like things made for each other, they exactly fit. The two never failed to fit. Never a heart received God's mercy, but it filled it,—satisfied it; and that can be said of nothing else under the sun. Beggars have become rich; sick people have been restored to

health, when life was despaired of, or after years of suffering; the blind have had their sight restored to them again; long-lost friends have come back, as from the dead; peasants have become princes, emperors, and kings: but none of them all have been satisfied. Each one thought if only he had this particular thing, it would be enough,—but each in turn was disappointed. Even an Alexander the Great, with a victorious career almost unexampled, is represented as weeping, because he had no more worlds to conquer! And it will be so to the end of time. You might as well think of filling a sieve, or of pouring water into the sea till it should overflow, as think of satisfying the heart of any one of us all. There are those who have had the best opportunities of judging, who have tried everything, and, like King Solomon, pronounced all to be "vanity and vexation of spirit." And it is not strange. At this hour, in one of our prisons, lies a murderer under sentence of death. Go to him, and tell him he has got a fortune left to him, and that he is "worth thousands;" clothe him with the finest apparel; give him the most dainty meats; put a crown on his head; give him all the things that for a life-time he has most desired; and then ask him if he is not satisfied. Would he not wonder at such a question being asked? "Do you not know," he would say, "that this is the 'condemned cell,' and that I am awaiting my execution? Listen! Do you hear these sounds? The scaffold is being erected, and every stroke of the hammer sounds my death-knell.

What are all these things to me? You but mock me with them. But bring me pardon, let me have the royal mercy, and then I shall be satisfied,—satisfied with my tatters, with a crust of bread and a cup of water,—with anything. But how is it possible for me to be satisfied else?" And is it strange that those who are under God's condemnation, and have never got His pardon, should be all unsatisfied?

I have seen young people, and old, with everything to make them happy otherwise, and yet they were wretched. The burden of unforgiven sin was such, that it was almost like hell begun. Nothing could satisfy. But mercy came, and what a blessed change! They could say, "I am filled! I am satisfied now!" And they looked it as well as said it.

It is remarkable how often this very expression is used in Scripture in connection with God's love and mercy: "They shall be *abundantly satisfied* with the fatness of thy house;" "He shall be *satisfied*, even as with marrow and with fatness;" "Who *satisfieth* thy mouth with good things;" "My people *shall be satisfied* with my goodness, saith the Lord."

Beloved young friends, your hearts are doubtless set on many things which you would like to have—which you think would be sure to make you happy. I beseech you not to try the experiment: they have all been tried already, and have been found wanting. Believe me when I say you may get all you desire, and you will be as far from being satisfied as ever.

God's mercy alone will satisfy you,—His forgiveness,—His favour,—His love. It is a law of His kingdom which admits of no violation. Make it your prayer: "O satisfy us with Thy mercy!"

3. The time of it: "Early."—The word literally is—in the morning. We can well suppose how eager Moses was to get what he asked—to get it soon, immediately, at once. Help could not come too soon. He might well say, "Early, early:" just as David said, "Make haste to help me;" "Make no tarrying, O my God,"—and just as Daniel said, "Defer not, for Thy name's sake."

This is the very prayer for young people. They may be said to be in the morning of life. The day will soon wear away. It will be noon, afternoon, evening, night, before ever they are aware; and so those who have been taught to number their days, cry out, "O satisfy us in the morning with Thy mercy." It is interesting to see how in God's word the promise and the prayer fit in to each other.* For example: "Those that seek Me early shall find Me:" "O satisfy us early." This is the way in which God would have us to turn back His word upon Himself. Many would offer the prayer, - "O satisfy us some day with Thy mercy: not early, but when night is coming on, -when we are ill or old, -or when death is drawing nigh!" Let your word be, "My voice shalt Thou hear in the morning: in the morning will I present

^{*} See "Sunbeams for Human Hearts."

my prayer to Thee." "O satisfy us in the morning!" You can never ask or get the blessing too early—too soon. There is no one too young to need mercy: and none too young to find it and be satisfied with it.

II. THE PLEA: "That we may rejoice and be glad all our days."-The reason given in support of the prayer is, that it would make those who offer it happy and glad, then and ever after. That would be no plea with a stranger, but it would be with a father. A beggar boy coming to one on the street, and making some large request of him, would not be likely to help himself greatly by saying, "It would make me so happy!" But in the case of a son or daughter, it would be an argument-a plea: "Father, do this for me, it would make me so glad." Thus we are allowed to plead with our Father in heaven. He would not have us to be unhappy. He mourns over our misery. He rejoices in our joy. He says, "O that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked in My ways: I should have fed them with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock should I have satisfied thee." We can use this as a plea with Him, "Lord have mercy on us, that we may rejoice and be glad."

How different Moses' notion of godliness was, from that of many now-a-days, both old and young. They say, "Religion is not for young people; you cannot put an old head on young shoulders; let them be happy a while; there is no need for introducing sad and serious things so soon." Sad things! Why, what says Moses? He says, "If ever old or young are to be happy, this is the way: 'Satisfy us with Thy mercy-that we may rejoice and be glad." We have here the secret of true happiness. Many would put it differently-"That we may be good and holy all our days;" or, "That we may do what is right, and please Thee all our days." That is all very good, and one may pray that too, but mark this—the plea is, that we may rejoice and be glad, as if joy and gladness could not be got in any other way. Satan would persuade as that we can only be satisfied and made glad with other things; but he is a liar when he says it, and it is at our peril to believe him. The sooner you experience the mercy of God, the sooner will you be truly happy and glad.

I. It will give present joy and happiness.—You know what it is to be forgiven in an ordinary way,—you know something of the joy of forgiveness. You had offended your father or mother, and everything began to wear a gloomy look. The bright sun seemed as if it mocked you; the canary in its cage, whose whistling used so to enliven you,—you could scarcely bear it. You had got your book on your knee, but the letters seemed as if they had all run together, and the page was either blank or utter confusion. Your heart was like a stone, and your feeling was, "I could not live under this for a single day." And then came the kind word and the

kind look and the kiss of reconciliation, and the request to go on some errand, or to do some other service, that most of all told you were forgiven. Who shall tell how you felt,—what a load was removed,—how you flew like an arrow, taking three steps at a time, like to run everybody over, so that on the street people turned to look after you, and wondered what was the matter. O but you rejoiced and were glad indeed! You felt as if you could do anything,—you had an obliging word and look for everybody,—you kissed the weeping baby into smiles,—you could almost have told the very cat and dog,—"I'm forgiven! I'm forgiven!" You have felt all this in such a case.

Now what must it be to be forgiven by God!—to have all the sins of a lifetime, that were like to drag the soul down to hell, blotted out !-- to have that blessed word spoken, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee!"—to be able to say, "God is now my friend; I'm not afraid to meet Him. He loves me, and how can I but love Him? If I were to die, it would only be to go home to my most loving Father and Saviour and Friend!" You may smile at my speaking of the dog and cat, and yet John Bunyan, who afterwards wrote the "Pilgrim's Progress," was so overjoyed when he first found mercy, that he could hardly contain himself, and tells us that as he went along the road, he could have told "the very crows on the ploughed land" what God had done for him, and how glad and happy he was, now that he was a pardoned man.

"Now methinks I hear him praising, Publishing to all around,— Sirs! is not my case amazing? What a Saviour I have found!"

You remember how he describes Christian, when he got a sight of the cross, and found his burden rolling off his back, as giving three leaps for joy, and then going on his way, singing as he went. Dear young friends, do you know this joy yet?—the joy of having found mercy—of being pardoned? If not, seek it now. It would make everything different to you—lessons, work, play—everything. "Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." "Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

2. It will give future joy and happiness: "all our days."—There are some things which give a kind of present happiness, but it does not last. Drink makes some people look very happy for a while,—very friendly, very merry,—but it is soon over, and the sore head and sore heart next morning, far more than outweigh the enjoyment of the night before. Even lawful things do not continue to satisfy us. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." When a child has got a new toy, at first it is everything to him; he is overjoyed about it, but soon he tires of it, and lets it fall out of sight, and seeks something else. But God's

mercy makes a man glad *all his days*. The gladdest hour of his life may be when he first finds it, but his peace is "like a river," and flows on from day to day.

And then when the end comes, it is best of all: "all our days,"-not only here, but hereafter,-and that is the great thing. Many think only of being happy, after their own fashion, all their days here. But that will soon be over, and what then? A youth, who was looking forward to success in life as the great object of his ambition, was telling a friend of his plans,-how he would go to college, and carry all before him there. "And what then?" He would begin to practise as a lawyer, and rise to the head of his profession. "And what then?" He would realise a handsome fortune, and in due time retire and spend the remainder of his days in peace and plenty. "And what then?" Why, then-then, he supposed he must die. "And what then?" He could go no further: he could not say, "all our days." O make sure that you can say it, so that that question, "What then?" may not overwhelm you.

"After the joys of earth,
After its songs of mirth,
After its hours of light,
After its dreams so bright—
What then?

"Only an empty name,
Only a weary frame,
Only a conscious smart,
Only an aching heart,

- "After this empty name,
 After this weary frame,
 After this conscious smart,
 After this aching heart—
 What then?
- "Only a sad farewell
 To a world loved too well,
 Only a silent bed
 With the forgotten dead.
- "After this sad farewell
 To a world loved too well,
 After this silent bed
 With the forgotten dead—
 What then?
- "Oh! then—the judgment throne!
 Oh! then—the last hope—gone!
 Then, all the woes that dwell
 In an eternal HELL!"

You may see much of the truth of our text even in this life. Whenever you see a happy believer, you may say, "O satisfy me with Thy mercy, that I may rejoice and be glad too!" But still more, when you get a glimpse of the heavenly world, and see the joy and happiness of those who are there, then still more you may cry out, "O satisfy me with Thy mercy, that I may rejoice and be glad all my days!" Will you make this prayer and this plea yours? I would like every one of you to learn it off,—to pray it,—to begin to-night; ay, and even to-night you may have the beginning of a joy and gladness that shall continue "all your days."

Pranch.

WE adore Thee, O Lord, as the God of mercy. Thou delightest in mercy. Thy mercy endureth for ever. As sufferers, we cry to Thee for mercy. As sinners, we cry to Thee for mercy. Some of us are sick; some of us are poor; some of us are lonely and friendless; some of us are unhappy; some of us are perplexed, and know not what to do. Have compassion upon us, and give us the help we need. Take the burden off our hearts, in the way Thou seest best. O satisfy us early with Thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Some of us are feeling the burden of sin. Wherever we look, we see our sin. We seek pardoning mercy. Our plea is that Jesus died. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain. We look to the atoning Blood. We thank Thee for as many of us as have tasted the joy of pardon,—the happiness of being accepted in the Beloved. Make us joyful Christians. Let us be filled with all joy and peace in believing. Make us holy Christians. Make us contented Christians. We pray for all the suffering and sorrowful, and especially for aged people who are sick and poor and lonely. Remember graciously all children who are ill, or uncared for; all fatherless and motherless children; all children in hospitals and reformatories; all children who are unhappy and unforgiven. Oh satisfy them early with Thy mercy, that they too may rejoice and be glad. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our loving Redcemer. Amen.





2 Death and the curse were in our cup— O Christ, 'twas full for Thee! But Thou hast drained the last dark

'Tis empty now for me.
That bitter cup—love drank it up;
Now blessing's draught for me.

3 The Father lifted up His rod— O Christ, it fell on Thee! Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God; There's not one stroke for me. Thy tears, Thy blood beneath it flowed:
Thy bruising healeth me.

4 The tempest's awful voice was

O Christ, it broke on Thee! Thy open bosom was my ward: It braved the storm for me.

Thy form was scarred—Thy visage marred,

Now cloudless peace for me.



MOMETIMES we hear of very alarming acci-

dents taking place in coal pits. There is often in these coal pits what is called "firedamp,"—a kind of gas; and when the miners have gone down into the pit, with their little open lamps fixed in the front of their caps,—when they have not a "safety-lamp,"—a "Geordie" or a "Davy," as it is called; or when a careless workman draws a match to light his pipe, the "fire-damp" explodes, and many precious lives are lost. Sometimes water rushes into the pit, or great masses of coal fall down, and there is no getting either out or in. The distress of the friends outside, at such times, is very great; they gather round and hang about the pit's mouth, never going to their homes even to get food; and when the searchers go down into the pit, in the hope of discovering and rescuing the imprisoned ones, the people wait on in breathless suspense, wondering whether, when they return, they will bring with them a dead

body or a living man. Mothers are there bewailing their missing children, beseeching others, or crying to God, to save them. Now, that is just what we might be doing, because we have reason to fear that many of you are lost children. You have never been saved. You were born in the City of Destruction, and have never come out of it. You are condemned sinners, and have never got pardon. And I only wish that we were like these mothers, whom I have been describing, unable to rest so long as we are uncertain about your safety,—waiting, watching, crying to God to save you.

The fact that you are children, and not men and women, does not make your deliverance less important. Not long since, in a storm that swept along our coast, two fishing-boats struck on the same rock, within sight of the shore. The life-boat was launched and manned by eleven brave men, who with difficulty made their way to the scene of danger. With their grappling irons they got hold of the boats, and held on till they were seen to rescue, as it seemed, five out of the one and four out of the other. The people on shore were watching their movements with intense anxiety, and eagerly counted those who were saved. They knew there should be ten; and one man was in agony, saying, "What, if the missing one is my boy!" He had a boy named George on board one of the boats, and although he was but a boy, his father's heart was like to break at the thought that he might be lost. If some one had come and said to him, "He is only a boy,—not a man, —do not be so anxious and distressed," would that at all have given him comfort? Would he have been able to rest till he saw his son step ashore? And so, our great concern about you is, to know whether you are safe,—safe for eternity. I have referred, in previous addresses, to your being lost, and to the one way in which you can be saved, but the subject is of such momentous importance, that I am anxious to set it before you as fully and clearly, and in as many lights as possible.

You will find my text in 1st Peter iii. 18:-

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."

The subject brought before us in these words most deeply concern every one of us. There is more in them than *Pardon*; but it will serve my purpose if I ask you to notice,—I. The *need* of Pardon. II. The *Gospel way* of Pardon. III. The *results* of Pardon.

I. The NEED of Pardon, suggested by the word in our text—"Sins." Unless you come to know and feel your need of a thing, you will never desire or welcome it. Just suppose that some night you are sitting quietly at tea. You live in the third or fourth storey, and I have got the fire-escape wheeled to your house. I rush up the ladder, and cry to you, "Here is a fire-escape; come away!" You would

say, "What is the need of it? There is no fire here; take the fire-escape away." Or I might come to you with a doctor or a nurse, or medicine, and you would say, "We don't want any of these; we have no need of them; we are quite well." Or I might come and say, "Now, I am going to give you pardon; -if you will go down on your knees and say you are sorry, I will forgive you." How strangely you would look at me, and say, "What does he mean? what need have we of his pardon?" There must be the felt need of the thing, before we can have any desire for the thing itself. If I wished to convince you that you needed pardon, from your father, for instance, in an ordinary matter, I should first have to shew you your offence. If you are playing with a ball, in a room where you have been forbidden, and you have broken a window, I might say to you, "You will need pardon for this." You ask, "For what?" I point to the broken window, and when you see what you have done, your heart begins to beat quick; you are afraid; your face colours when your father comes into the room; and when he sees the broken window, and says, "What is the meaning of this?" you say, "O! father, will you pardon me? will you forgive me?" You felt your need of pardon, before you thought of asking it, or had any care for getting it.

I am afraid many young people do not feel their need of pardon, in a far higher sense. I wish I could write the word "SINS" on your hearts to-day. This is one of the

greatest words in all the Bible,—in all the world. It tells about our offences against God, -about our breaking of His holy law, - about the evil we have done against our loving Father in heaven. And when once we come to get a sight of our sins, as against God, we never can rest until we have got His pardon. Perhaps some of you think you have not very much to say about these "sins." I wish you would think about them. Did it ever occur to you to take your pen and try to count them? I shall give you some headings for the different columns :- Eyesins, Hand-sins, Tongue-sins, Heart-sins. These are specimens,-sins that you have looked, and acted, and spoken, and thought, and felt, and desired: what you have done of evil; what you have omitted to do of good. Beloved young people, I am sure of this, that if you make the attempt, you will soon come to be persuaded that the best arithmetician among you cannot cast up the account. One who tried it, says, "If I should speak of them, they are more than can be numbered:" and again, "They are more than the hairs of my head."

If you had committed but one sin all your days, that one sin would deserve death. Think of a man who had committed murder, saying, "I only did it once, I have not done it twenty times. What cause have I to fear? How should I have to die for one offence?" And then add up the sums, as you do with other accounts. Here are so many things standing against you. One costs is, another 7s. 6d., another £1, and so on, and you count up the various items and

say,-This is what they all come to. Just deal with your sins in a similar way. One sin deserves death, and the next deserves death, and the next, and the next! What then do all my sins deserve? Why, ten thousand deaths! I deserve to die for one of them, and here I have countless thousands. "Every sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and in that which is to come." What a case is mine! Anybody who gets a sight of his sin, and of what his sin deserves, will come to feel his need of pardon. Only one who is absolutely sinless, needs no pardon. I would like each of you to make the prayer yours, "Lord, teach me what it is to be a sinner! Lord, shew me my sins!" I pray that the Holy Spirit may shew you your need, so that the pardon which God is willing to give, may be welcome to your hearts.

II. The Gospel way of Pardon.—I have a reason for putting in the word *Gospel* here, because there are various other ways in which people try to get pardon. Some people think it is enough to ask pardon. Others think the way of pardon is to be sorry for their sins. Others think the way of pardon is—trying to be as good as they can—saying their prayers, and striving to do what is right. Now the Gospel way of pardon, though it might be said to include all these, is yet different from them all. It is very simple. It is very shortly told. I have heard an esteemed Edinburgh minister tell of his visiting an aged Christian man on his deathbed,

and saying to him, "Is it not a happy thing that we have the Gospel set forth in so few and in such simple words?" The old man looked up and said, "One word, sir!" His friend said, "What is the one word?" He replied, "Substitution!"*—The whole Gospel in one word—Substitution! That is perhaps rather a difficult word for some of you, and yet I would like you all to understand and remember it. If any one were to ask me, "What is the way of salvation?" and I wanted to put it as shortly and as fully as possible, I would say—it is the immediate, present acceptance of Christ as the Substitute, on the authority of God's word and offer.

I shall endeavour, as best I can, to explain what substitution is, or rather, what a substitute is. If you had got into debt,—if you were owing money which you could not pay, and I were to go to the man to whom it was due, and say, "Look to me for the money, I shall pay it," then I might be said to be your "surety," or "substitute."

If you had committed some crime, and were apprehended and imprisoned, and the law allowed me to come and say, "I shall take your place as the wrongdoer, and suffer the punishment in your stead," then I would be your "substitute."

There was a little boy who had done wrong. His mother was about to punish him, when his brother,

[&]quot;"He repeated the one word over and over, with great emphasis, though he had by these pauses to interrupt the moanings of much bodily agony."— Extract Letter.

unable to bear the thought of his being punished, said, "Please, mother, punish me instead of him." And she did it. She had a reason for doing it. There was a lesson which she wished to teach her boys, and so she punished the one who did no wrong, and the one who did the wrong escaped. She wished to shew by an innocent boy suffering for a guilty one, how the Lord Jesus was the Substitute of sinners.

There was once a king, who made a law, that if any one committed a certain offence, he should have his eyes put out. The first to commit the offence was the king's own son. I daresay some of the people would say, "We shall see now whether the king will be just, when his own son is the offender." Others might ask, "Who shall dare to put out the eyes of the king's son?" But the king said, "Two eyes must go for this sin." He could not think of his son being blind all his days, and he did this,—he gave orders that one of his own eyes should be put out, and one of his son's. And ever after, when any one saw the one-eyed king, he might have said, the king was the "substitute" of his son.

Soldiers who are on guard must be very particular. No one is allowed to speak to them. Night and day they must keep watch uninterruptedly. And in a time of war, or of danger, when any one, passing! them without being noticed, might do serious damage, if they were found sleeping at their post, they would be shot. Well, it is told that during one of the First





THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON AND THE SENTINEL.

Napoleon's wars, one of his sentinels became so exhausted that he fell asleep. The Emperor was passing, and seeing him sleeping, he took his musket and did duty for him; and when the soldier awoke, there was the Emperor with his musket on his shoulders, pacing backwards and forwards, in his stead. In other words, he became his "substitute,"—did his work, and saved his life.

In some countries men are drawn by lot to serve as soldiers. This is called the "Conscription," and in some cases is greatly dreaded. One is drawn, the only son of his mother; she cannot think of his leaving her, and some kind friend says, "I will go in your son's stead." And he goes to the wars, and fights, and falls, and finds a grave on a foreign shore. That self-sacrificing friend becomes the "substitute" of the other.

There is a touching story told regarding a body of men who had taken part in a rebellion, and were sentenced to have every tenth man of their number shot, to deter others from doing what they had done. Among these were two, a father and son. We can fancy we see the men drawn up, in a long line. Fixing, perhaps, on the first man by lot, he is marked out for death, and every tenth man thereafter, counting from him. The father and son stand together, and as the son runs his eye along the line, he discovers that his father is a doomed man. He realises what it will be to have their family left without a head, his mother a widow, the old home stripped of its light and joy, and,

quick as thought, he steps in where his father stood, and falls in his stead. He becomes his father's "substitute;" and, if you ask the father in after years how he was saved, with the tear in his eye, and a quivering voice, he will tell you, he was saved by a substitute,—that substitute his most loved and loving son.

Thrilling narratives are told of events like those that have just been mentioned, in connection with the late American war. One is described as visiting the cemetery, where many a soldier was buried, and erecting over one of the graves that had an interest of a peculiar kind for him, a tombstone, with the brief but touching inscription, "He died for Me!" It was the story of a "substitute."

Thus you see that a substitute is one who takes the place of another, one who pays the debt of another, one who does the work of another, one who suffers the penalty due to another.

This, then, is what I want to bring out, as the most important thing I could possibly say to you. The Gospel way of pardon is by Substitution, — by One taking the place of another, by the Just taking the place of the unjust,—the Good taking the place of the evil,—the just Jesus, the good Jesus, taking the place of the unjust and the evil. None of the cases I have mentioned at all suffice to bring out fully this glorious truth; and I must still further make use of an illustration taken from God's own word, to explain what I mean. I daresay you have often

noticed how much is said in the Old Testament about sacrifices. If any one had done wrong, by God's appointment he took a lamb without blemish,—a type of the sinless Saviour,—brought it to the priest, and laid his hand on its head, as much as to say, "I take this innocent, sinless lamb to be my substitute. I have been guilty of sin, and cannot put it away. I deserve death, but I transfer my sin to this lamb, that it may die instead of me." Then the priest took the sacrificial knife, and plunged it into the lamb, and the man said, "I'm forgiven,—my sin is put away. There is the blood. I am pardoned through the blood." The lamb was the man's sacrifice or substitute.

Or I might go back to the time of the Passover, when the destroying angel was to pass through the land of Egypt, and the first-born of man and beast was to die. Israel is told to take a lamb and kill it, and to take of the blood and sprinkle it on the lintel and side-posts of each door. Then as the angel of death goes through the land, when he comes to a door on which there is no blood, he slays the first-born; but wherever he sees the blood, he passes by. There is here the same idea of substitution,—the blood of the lamb shed instead of the blood of those who were within. "When I see THE BLOOD," the Lord says, "I will pass over you."

In both of these cases, the lamb was what is called a "type" or picture of the Lord Jesus, as the great Sacrifice, or Surety, or Substitute. The Old Testament is full of the subject. Everywhere you read of the

killing of animals in sacrifice, and the one great idea in it all is, making atonement for sin by the substitution of the innocent for the guilty. The shedding of so much sacrificial blood, ever since our first parents' first sin, would have no meaning but for this. It kept the idea of substitution constantly before the Old Testament Church. Hence we have such prayers as David's in the fifty-first Psalm, "Purge me with hyssop (sprinkling the blood), and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And when we come to New Testament Scripture, and especially to the Epistle to the Hebrews,* it casts a clear and beautiful light on all this.

God is just and holy, as well as merciful and loving. He is a King and Judge, as well as a Father. The authority of His law must be maintained. His justice must be vindicated. The law in its precept and penalty must be satisfied. It must be perfectly obeyed; and in the event of disobedience, the penalty of the broken law—death—must be suffered, either by each man himself, or by another in his room. We have all disobeyed, and so there is no hope for any one of us, except in the obedience and death of Christ. "Without shedding of blood is no remission," or pardon.† And so, when at length the Lord Jesus appeared, He was

^{* &}quot;He was especially devoted to the Epistle to the Hebrews, which he valued for its clear view of the Atonement and of the sympathy of Christ; and no part of his Bible is so much worn, this being indeed almost worn away."—Memoir of Dr George Wilson, Professor of Technology in the University of Edinburgh, and Director of the Industrial Museum of Scotland.

[†] Heb. ix. 22.

called "The Lamb of God." John the Baptist joyfully exclaimed, when he saw Him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."* Paul said of Him, in one place, "God hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us,"—that is, in our stead,—"that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him:"† and in another place, "But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."‡ And Peter said, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."§ These passages may serve to bring out the link between the Old and New Testaments on this subject.

There can thus be no pardon without substitution. There is no possibility of getting pardon except through the substitution of God's dear Son,-by taking "the Lamb of God" as our Substitute, our Sacrifice, our Saviour. And now I have come to you to-day, in God's name, to offer you a Substitute; to tell you that the Son of God, the well-beloved Son of God, the only one who can take away sin, is willing to take away your sin. Are you willing to take Him? I would come to each of you and say, You are lost; and unless you get pardon, you will be lost for ever. The Lord Jesus Christ is willing to be your Substitute, now and here; and in God's name, and on the authority of His own Word, I offer Jesus Christ to be your Substitute. Here is One willing to take your place. Will you have Him? If you take Him, you are saved, you are pardoned.

^{*} John i. 29. † 2 Cor. v. 21. † Heb. ix. 26. § 1 Peter ii. 24.

This is just what the Bible means, when it speaks of "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is what the Bible calls faith. This is what the Bible calls coming to Christ,—receiving Christ. It is just taking Christ to be my Substitute. I cannot pay my debts, and He offers to be my Surety, and to pay them for me. I cannot bear the punishment of my sins, which is God's wrath and curse, here and hereafter, and He offers to bear it for me. Perhaps you ask, "How shall I go about it? What shall I say to Him?" Go direct to Himself, and say to Him, "Lord Jesus! I take Thee at Thy word; Thou art mine!" "Lord Jesus! I take Thee to be my Substitute; Thou art mine!" I wish I could make this plain. I wish I could get some boy or girl to-day thus to take God at His word. I pray that the Holy Spirit may teach you to understand this. I would plead the promise which the Lord Jesus gave regarding that blessed Teacher, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you."

This is the great separating line that divides the whole world into two classes. Every one who has taken Christ as his Substitute, is a pardoned, accepted, saved boy or girl, or man or woman; and every one who has not got this Substitute, is unsaved, condemned, lost. "He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son, hath not life." "He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already."

Let me ask you to remember these words of our text, as bringing out this precious truth—"Christ suffered . . . the Just for the unjust." Especially let me ask you to notice the little word "FOR," in this and in some other passages of Scripture, as bringing out the substitution of Christ—"CHRIST FOR ME!" He was "made sin for us." "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many." "Who died for us." "I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." "The Just for"—instead of—in the place of—"the unjust."

When visiting our Jewish Mission Schools at Pesth, the capital of Hungary, a few years ago, I heard the truth on which I have been dwelling, strikingly brought out by one of the pupils. The lesson was about the crucifixion of Christ, and the teacher asked, "What connection have we with the work and death of the Lord Jesus?" A young Jew held out his hand, as being prepared to give an answer, and said, "It is just as if we had the merit: it is just as if we had been crucified!"

Some of you may not take the trouble to understand this, or feel much concern about it, just now. But I trust there are others who will even now receive and welcome this Gospel message; and, perhaps, by and by, the word may come back again,-to some, it may be, on a dying bed,—and prove the power of God unto salvation. Christ my Substitute! "The Just for the unjust!"

"My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of Thine,
While as a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

"My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou didst bear,
When hanging on the cursëd tree,
And knows her guilt was there."

III. THE RESULTS OF PARDON,—That is to say, the consequences of being pardoned through the substitution of another,—through the Lord Jesus taking our place.

There is no more danger. There is no condemnation to them who are thus in Christ Jesus. Suppose we had been living long ago. The night of the Passover is over. It is early in the morning, and one of you might say, "Do you hear that noise next door? Do you hear these people wailing for their dead? Is there no fear of the destroying angel coming to us?" I might answer, "Oh, no! There is no fear. The blood is on the door, and we are safe. The blood of our Substitute is there, and we are all safe." This is the one way of being really safe,—having a Substitute. Once we have taken Jesus as our Substitute, there is absolute safety,—no wrath, no curse, no hell. There

is much yet remaining to be done in us; but so far as being lost is concerned, we are as safe as if we were in heaven. My sin is imputed or reckoned to Christ, and His righteousness is imputed to me; and, like John Bunyan, I can say, "My righteousness is in heaven!" and so I am safe.

2. There is happiness.—I have already shewed you what a happy thing it is to be forgiven, even by an earthly friend,—to hear from his lips the words, "I forgive you," or to see it, without being expressed in words. How much more must it take a burden off the heart, and fill that heart with joy, to have a sense of God's pardoning mercy, and to have a humble assurance that sin is taken away!

This is the secret of happy living. A young friend, who had been in much anxiety about her soul, was shewn into my study one night. Her face was quite radiant. It was such a change from what had been before, that I could not help asking, "What has happened to-night?" The brief but expressive answer was, "I have taken Him to be my Substitute!" That explained all. And if you were to ask her the same question to-day, I believe it would be to get the same reply. One of the most joyous-looking people I ever met, was a young fisherman's wife at Ferryden, a fishing-village in the north of Scotland, where there was a wonderful work of grace some years ago. She had been in great distress of mind, and went to her father's house, where she met with several godly people, who

pointed her to Christ, the Substitute. There and then she took Him to be her own, and from that moment everything was changed to her. The very air seemed sweeter to her. You might have seen the joyful woman, when on her way back to her own house, standing for an instant on the village street, and afterwards giving this account of that gladdest hour in her life:—"The wind, as it blew in my face, was sweet as honey to me, and I opened my mouth wide that I might get more of it!" She is now in glory.

This is the secret of happy dying. Dr Carey, the great Indian scholar and missionary, tells of his visit to one of the wards in an Indian hospital. On a bed, in a corner of the room, lay a dying soldier. Stepping gently up to him, he knelt at his bedside, and whispered into his ear, "My dear brother, are you afraid to die?" Looking up, with a smile, the dying man answered, "Oh no, sir; I have died already!" He meant that Jesus, his Substitute, had died for him, and he had not to die, but only to fall asleep in Jesus. So Paul says (2 Cor. v. 14), "If One died for all, then all died." Would you not like to be able to say, "I have died already"?

3. There is *gratitude*,—thankfulness. You can fancy the French soldier, of whom I spoke, awaking and finding the Emperor Napoleon standing on guard as his substitute. Oh! how grateful he would be to him. What a thankful man he would be all his days! And so it is with those who have taken Jesus as their Substi-

tute, and have got pardon through His blood. What thankfulness fills their hearts to the loving Saviour!

4. There is love.—There was a remarkable man in Dundee, named Robert Annan, who not long ago was drowned. He had been a great sinner, but was converted to God. He was an expert swimmer, and was known as the "Water Dog," he was so much at home in the water. He was often on the watch for opportunities of saving people's lives, and many a boy who had fallen into the water he followed and brought safe to shore. "Swimming," he said, "was a gift bestowed on him by God, and he desired to use it for the glory of God." * The last he saved was a little boy, of eleven, who had fallen into the water. Robert plunged in, got hold of him, and was bearing him to the shore, when he got into a current that was too strong for him. He felt he must let go the boy, or go himself. It may be that, in that dread hour, this thought occurred to him,-"Perhaps this boy is not a saved boy. Perhaps he is not one of Christ's boys, and if he is drowned he will be lost. And Jesus is mine. If I am drowned, I shall but go home to heaven." And so he managed to get the boy within the reach of help, and he was saved. He then raised up his hand and waved it, and with a smile on his face-for the people were near enough to see it-he sank exhausted, and was drowned. I suppose that boy is living to-day, and Robert Annan,

^{*} See "The Christian Hero: A Sketch of the Life of Robert Annan." By Rev. J. Macpherson, Dundee.

who saved him, was, in a sense, his "substitute,"—he saved him by sacrificing his own life. If you found out that boy, and said to him, "Did you know Robert Annan?" the tear would start in his eye, and you might feel his heart beating quick, as he would answer, somewhat in this fashion,—"Ay, I knew him, and love him. His name is dear to me. I never pass his house, or hear his name, or think of him, without loving him. He saved me at the cost of being drowned himself!" That is the secret of so many people loving the Lord Jesus. His name is dear to them. They sing with a full heart—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!"

The reason is, He saved them; He was their Substitute; He took their place; He died for them; He suffered for their sins, in their stead,—"the Just for the unjust." It is no wonder you have no love to Christ, if you have not taken Him as your Substitute. But when you have so taken Him, and have got pardon, you can say, I love Jesus, "who loved me, and gave Himself for me." "We love Him, because He first loved us."

5. Lastly, there is *service*.—It is told of the Duke of Orleans ("Philip Egalité"), father of Louis Philippe, the last king of the French, that on one occasion he was out riding, followed by his servant, who was also on horseback. The Duke had crossed an old bridge over a rapid stream in safety, but when his man-servant was

following, the bridge gave way, and horse and rider were thrown into the river. In a moment the Duke leaped from his horse's back, plunged into the stream, and with considerable difficulty succeeded in saving the drowning man, and bringing him to land. Need I describe the scene that followed? All dripping as he was, you might have seen the grateful servant prostrated at his master's feet, promising the gratitude and service of a life-time, and asking what he could do to serve one who had done so much for him.

You know the story of "The Heart made Captive." -the slave bought with British gold, who vowed he should never serve his purchaser. But when he learned that the stranger had bought him to set him free, there were no bounds to his love and gratitude, and no limits to his service. When asked as to the secret of his constant and devoted service, there was but the one answer, "He redeemed me! he redeemed me!"

Such is the secret of all right-hearted service done for Christ, as well as of all holy living. "He is my Substitute. He suffered for me. He died for me. Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits unto me?"

And now, what is to be made of this message? I did not bring it to you merely that you might listen to it as a matter of duty, and then think no more about it; but in the hope that God, the Holy Spirit, might carry it home to your hearts, and make it the means of your salvation, - with the hope that some

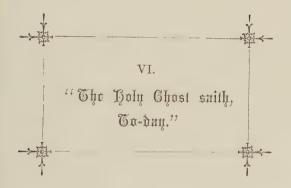
boy or girl might even be saved in the very hour of hearing or reading it. It is the great burden of the gospel message. "Here is Christ the Substitute, will you take Him?" Shall there be no cry going out to the Substitute, asking Him to be yours,—crying to Him to be yours? I spoke at the outset of two fishing-boats that struck on the same rock in the north of Scotland. The life-boat went out and tried twice to reach them, and failed; and it seemed hopeless to try again. What was it that led the crew to try once more? One of them had a little nephew,—the boy George I spoke of, -on board one of the boats, and when the life-boat came close up to it, only to be again swept back, he heard the boy saying, "Oh! uncle Willie, will ye no save me?" The rest of the crew would have given up the attempt, and instead of using the boat further, would have sent out a rocket, but for that uncle; the boy's voice rang in his ears,—he could not get quit of it, "Oh! uncle Willie, will ye no save me?" and so they made one attempt more, and succeeded, with God's help, in bringing all safe to shore. I wonder if there will be no cry heard from the sinking ship to-day,-from one and another of you,-"Lord Jesus, will ye no save me? Lord Jesus, wilt Thou not be my Substitute? Lord Jesus, I take Thee as my Substitute, Thou art mine!"

I leave these thoughts with you, on one of the greatest of all subjects. Oh that this very night there might be some earnest talk about the Substitute, among those who have heard or read this address, asking the question at yourselves, and at each other—"Have you taken the Substitute? Have you taken Him as your own? Is this pardon yours, this safety, this gratitude, this love, this service?" That is one of the best ways of getting an answer to the great question, "Are you on the road to heaven?"

- "A flame was kindled in God's ire—
 O Christ, it burned on Thee!
 It was a hot, consuming fire,
 Even in the fair green tree:
 There did that fire feed and expire;
 Now it is quenched for me.
- "Jehovah bade his sword awake—
 O Christ, it woke 'gainst Thee!
 Thy blood the flaming blade must slake;
 Thy heart its sheath must be—
 All for my sake, my peace to make:
 Now sleeps that sword for me.
- "The Holy One did hide His face—
 O Christ, 'twas hid from Thee!
 Dumb darkness wrapt Thy soul a space—
 The darkness due to me;
 But now that face of radiant grace
 Shines forth in light on me.
- "For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died,
 And I have died in Thee:
 Thou'rt risen; my bands are all untied;
 And now Thou liv'st in me;
 When purified, made white, and tried,
 Thy glory then for me!"

Prantr.

O RIGHTEOUS FATHER, we bow before Thee as a holy and just King and Judge, as well as a merciful and loving Father. Thy law is holy and just and good. Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. And we have broken Thy law. We have offended Thy justice. We are defiled and polluted with sin. We have deserved death. And we are utterly helpless. We cannot save, or help to save ourselves. Salvation is of the Lord. We thank Thee for providing a Substitute. We thank Thee for the offer of a Substitute, meeting the whole need of the sinner. We give Thee eternal praise and thanks for CHRIST THE SUBSTITUTE. Help the youngest of us to understand what Thy Word says about this. O Holv Spirit, clearly shew this to each of us. Help us to understand about the blood of Christ, about the imputed righteousness of Christ, about union to Christ. Keep us from putting anything else in the place of this. Help us and others to say, "Lord Jesus, I take Thee at Thy word, I take Thee to be my Substitute, Thou art mine!" And give us to know the safety, the happiness, the gratitude, the love, the holiness. the service of the forgiven. Blessed Jesus! make us wholly Thine—for ever Thine. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, the God of Salvation. Amen.







OU hear much about GREAT MEN: you are familiar with their names, I might almost say with their faces,-I am sure I may say with many of their words. Their names you have known ever since you knew anything. Their faces have been looking down upon you from their gilt or mahogany or rosewood frames, as far back as you can remember, so that they seem to you like old friends. And their wise and good sayings you have heard and read so often, that you have come to think them almost as much your own as anything else that belongs to you. These great kings, or great statesmen, or great scholars, or great reformers, or great ministers, or great soldiers, had, most of them, some favourite sayings, which have come to be associated with their names, some of these very short and very striking, so that, heard once, they are sure to be remembered, like short, sharp, blows, cutting deep and leaving their mark behind them.

Take, as an example of what I refer to, the word which Oliver Cromwell, the famous Protector of England, addressed to his men,-a word which, when reverently spoken and rightly understood, contains valuable counsel for us in all our undertakings, "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry!" This was just another way of saying "Trust in God, and do your duty!"—" Use the means, and leave the issue to God!" -let neither stand alone, but always both together. And then there is that grand old word of our bold British Admiral, Nelson, when, on the eve of the great sea-battle of Trafalgar, he ordered the signal to be given, which soon spread from ship to ship, and from man to man, till the whole fleet had it, and all as one man were under its power,—" England expects every man to do his duty!" That word has been echoing ever since, and will last as long as old England herself, -at least as long as she is worthy of her name. What Nelson's famous signal did that day, amid the cannons' roar and flash and smoke and death, it has done many a time since,—it has stimulated to duty, and led on to victory.

Many of these sayings of famous men have been preserved in their "coat-of-arms" by their descendants, and are kept constantly before them, painted on their carriages, engraved on their silver plate, inscribed on their books,—ay, you cannot even get a letter from one of them, without having the pithy words and the quaint and curious device stamped on the envelope and

paper, the first thing that meets your eye. These are not intended merely to keep up the memory of the men who first used them, or whose character and deeds were the occasion of their being used, but they generally convey some lesson worth the learning, and furnish what may serve as a motto for life. Some of our young people have albums filled with such crests, in all the colours of the rainbow, affording much interesting and not unprofitable information. You have the lion rampant-just on the point of springing-and above it the words "Ready! Aye ready!"-or a beaver, with "Obsta Principiis" ("resist the first beginnings");—or a fox, with יהוה יראה ("the Lord will see to it," or provide);—or a dove with an olive leaf in its mouth, and its feet on an anchor, with "Espérer c'est vivre" ("to hope is to live"); - or a hand holding a spear, with "Doe or Die;"-or a hand pointing to heaven, with the legend, "The best things are coming," or "Heaven at last." In all these cases, the lesson is unmistakable, and is good and useful for all.

We are told that when John Calvin was twenty-five years of age, he engraved on his seal the device of a hand presenting a heart in sacrifice, and wrote round it the words, "Cor meum velut mactatum Domino in sacrificium offero;" and that from that time to his dying day, in all his gigantic labours, and amid much reproach and danger and suffering for Christ's sake, he took this as the motto of his life. I have got this engraved, only translating the Latin words into English:—



I wish we could live and labour in the spirit of these memorable words.

And now let me give you a word that may furnish you with a motto for your life,—that may be useful alike in the things of time and of eternity—short enough to be remembered by the youngest, and yet weighty enough for the oldest,—which, if kept in mind, and ever acted on, will make you good and useful here, and help to prepare you for glory hereafter. It is a word which many young people do not like, at least so far as duty is concerned, but it is all the more needful on that account to have it pressed upon us. And when furnishing you with such a motto, I shall give you none of man's sayings; I must rise above man, the greatest and wisest and best that ever was. We must take Divine wisdom when we can get it. And so, forgetting the men of whom we have been speaking, and any

sayings of theirs, let us with uncovered head and humble heart, listen to One who is greater than man, for a wiser even than Solomon is here. Hebrews iii. 7:—

"The Holy Ghost saith, To-day."

It is the mistake and ruin of many, both young and old, that they believe and obey Satan rather than God; that they take the Devil's motto and act upon it, and refuse God's, saying, in regard to the choosing and doing of all that is truly good, and the leaving of all that is evil, - "to-morrow!" instead of "to-day!" It was so, in the case of those to whom the Holy Ghost spoke this word at first, and of those to whom the apostle repeated it afterwards. They intended to mend their ways: they did not mean to go on always as they had been doing; but then they were in danger of putting off, and of saying, "To-morrow," as others had done before them, till it was too late; and so the Holy Ghost, by His servant, breaks in, to put an end to this state of things, and, pointing back to those who had done just what they were doing, and had perished because of it, He stops them, and with all earnestness, and with all affection, says to them, "To-day!"

It is as if two hands were held out to each of us, — the one stretching down from heaven, the other reaching up from hell,—each holding out and offering to us what should serve as a guide through life. The one motto is "To-DAY!" the other is "TO-MORROW!"

And as you stand undecided and hesitating between the two, I would lay loving hands on you, and, lifting up my voice as a trumpet, would re-echo what the Holy Ghost saith, "To-day!"

We have here, 1. A Great Speaker: the Holy Ghost. 2. A Momentous Word: To-day. 3. The Lesson.

I. A GREAT SPEAKER.—I ask your attention to this at the outset, because so much depends, for the way in which we regard and treat what is said, on the person who says it. I have elsewhere* spoken at some length about the Third Person of the Godhead—God the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory with God the Father, and God the Son. I have there tried to explain what He is, and what He does,—how much He has loved sinners, and said to them, and done for them,—and how without Him no sinner could ever be saved—without Him no sinner could ever come to Jesus or be fit for heaven. Let us, therefore, give earnest heed to what He says.

In connection with the Holy Ghost being the speaker here, I have three remarks to make. In regard to what is said, you may be sure that—

I. It is important,—for "the Holy Ghost saith" it. Much importance is attached to what great men say. A man's position gives importance to what he says,—a king, for instance, or a statesman, or a master, or

^{*} See chapter entitled, "The Holy Spirit," in a former volume, "The Golden Fountain."

a judge. You and I might often speak from morning till night, and nobody would care much or pay much attention to what we said. Our words would not be repeated; they would not be printed; they would not be telegraphed to other parts of the country; they would not be thought of sufficient importance. But in the case of these others, how different!

Some years ago, there was a great Volunteer Review in the Queen's Park at Edinburgh. Riflemen came from all parts of the country, Lowlands and Highlands. The Marquis of Breadalbane rode on his Highland pony at the head of his kilted Highlanders, as in the old gatherings of the clans. The Fife Mounted Rifles stood out conspicuous, and others in their scarlet and grey uniforms diversified the scene, while spectators from far and near clustered like bees on every rock and rising ground. It was a sight never to be forgotten. The Queen took her place on a raised platform, and regiment after regiment passed before her. Others made their remarks and said what they thought, but nobody asked what they said, or paid particular attention to it. Every one was eager to hear what THE QUEEN thought and said. Once and again it was reported that she had spoken approvingly of some particular corps. If it had been no more than "That is a fine body of men!" how it would have been caught up and repeated and carried home, and have gone the round of the newspapers, and have given its character to the regiment, so that perhaps they would have called themselves "The Queen's Own"

ever after. How important it was, as the word of a Queen!

Sometimes when I have gone to visit the sick, the door opened as if by magic, before I had time to knock. And then there was a look of disappointment, as much as to say, "It is only the minister! We thought it was the doctor. We were waiting for him, wearying for him, watching every step." When I go in, I take the sick boy's hand in mine, and feel his pulse, and say what I think of his case, but his friends don't attach much importance to what I say, for they think that, as it is not my business, I do not know very much about it. But when the doctor comes, how eagerly they ask his opinion, how they hang upon his lips, how they watch his expression of face, as if he had the power of life and death in his hands! How important his word is, as the word of a Doctor!

One day, I went into the High Court of Justiciary to hear the trial of some men and women in whom I was interested, who had been involved in a popular outbreak. The evidence was led, the jury was charged, and retired to consider what verdict they should give. During their absence, there was quite a buzz of voices, every man speaking to his neighbour as to what he thought would be the issue of the case. At length a bell rang. In a moment all was silence. The jury returned to their box. The foreman announced the verdict, and then the judge rose to pronounce sentence. There was a death-like stillness. You might have heard a pin fall.

And as the judge acquitted some, and sentenced others to so many months of imprisonment, I cannot describe to you the looks of the prisoners at the bar,—how they hung upon the judge's lips, and how deep was the expression of relief or the long-drawn sigh, when he had spoken. How important his word was, as the word of a Judge!

In all these cases, people attach importance to what is said, because of the person who says it. How much more important is the Word of THE HOLY GHOST, whether it be for or against,—whether it be in the way of warning, or encouragement, or command, or reproof! When He speaks, it is with authority; and what He says deeply concerns you. When He opens His lips, it is nothing of ordinary importance that He is going to say. The Queen's word, or the Doctor's word, or the Judge's word, is nothing to the word of the Holy Ghost. When He comes to you, you may be sure it is some momentous errand that has brought Him; and while all Scripture is His Word, such a saying as that in our text is His, in a special sense, and is of peculiar significance. And as, when a king speaks, every voice is hushed,-it needs no herald to cry, "Silence!" so when the Holy Spirit speaks, there may well be the deepest interest and attention and reverence. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith."

2. It is true,—for "the Holy Ghost saith" it. Sometimes the word of the wisest and greatest is not to be trusted, and even the truest and best may mistake.

Though they would not knowingly deceive us, even those who love us most, often mislead us. We cannot be sure that any one will be always right. Some of us have been so often deceived and misled, that we almost resolve never to trust anybody again. One that is thoroughly true, O how rare! We feel tempted to say, "All men are liars." Have you not sometimes, when in some great anxiety or trouble, sighed, "O that I had some one whom I could thoroughly trust!" Think of the Lord Jesus Himself,-betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, forsaken by all the disciples. What may we expect after that? Even of mothers, it is said, "They may forget." And if even a mother cannot always be trusted, whom shall we believe and trust? Here is One, who never deceived, never mistook, never was untrue, whose word never was broken,—the Holy Ghost. He is the "Spirit of truth." He is "God who cannot lie." His is the "Scripture which cannot be broken." You may believe what He says. He is Truth itself.

3. It is kind,—for "the Holy Ghost saith" it. He is the Spirit of Love as well as of Truth. Some people tell us things that are important and true, but only to vex and annoy and injure us. They seem glad to bring us any bad news they can, so that their appearance is almost like that of those sea-birds that foretell a coming storm, we almost fear the sight of them. But with a father, how different. He has to tell me something I do not like to hear—to reprove me—to warn me. He takes me away by myself: I see the tear standing in

his eye; I hear his voice quivering; how gently and tenderly he speaks, his whole look is a look of love,—and whatever he may have to say, I feel assured that he loves me, and that but for loving me he never would do as he does. And so it is with the Holy Ghost. With what a gentle voice *He* speaks,—how winning and tender,—how sorrowful and plaintive His tone when He has to reprove; or if ever His voice seems loud and harsh, it is still like a father's.

I daresay you have seen people in anxiety about their souls. They were in great distress or alarm about their sins. Their happiness was gone; they could not work, or eat, or sleep. Sometimes it seemed as if their very reason would give way, when they thought of "the wrath to come." And in regard to all this, you have heard it said that it was the Holy Spirit's doing, that it was the result of His dealing with them; and you have thought hardly and unkindly of Him in consequence. And yet never was He more kind than when He did this very thing.

As you pass up the High Street of Edinburgh, you see a tall block of houses, newly built. Many strangers turn aside to see this, and regard it with peculiar interest. Over the archway, carved in stone, is the figure of a boy, and above it are inscribed the words, "Heave awa', chaps; I'm no deid yet!" It carries us back to a Saturday night not many years ago. The night was far advanced. Many of the people in the different flats had retired to rest. All of a sudden,

those who were awake had a strange feeling, as if amid the heavings of an earthquake, and heard a strange, rumbling sound; and in ten minutes that huge tenement of six or seven storeys had fallen, and many were buried amid the ruins. Next morning, twenty dead bodies were laid out in the Police Office, waiting for recognition. Just before the final crash took place, you might have heard a man roughly awaking a woman and her children, sternly ordering them out of the house, forcing them out of doors, with nothing but their night-dress on, in the cold of a November night. "Hard-hearted man!" you say; "cruel man!" Not so. He was the husband of the woman, and the father of these children; and just because he loved them, he roused them as he did. There was not a moment to lose; and scarcely had he thrust them out at the door into the stair-case, when he had himself to leap for life, and the whole building went down with a thundering noise. It was far on in the night, before, with the help of torch-light and many strong and willing hands, the dead and hurt were all dug out of the rubbish; and as the work went on, and some one seized the hand or foot of a boy, he heartened them on with the words which are now carved above the entrance to the re-built house. The harsh voice and seemingly rough hand of the father of whom I have spoken, were the hand and voice of love, and saved his dear ones while others perished. And just so it is with the Holy Ghost. When He awakens and alarms, it is to warn of coming danger, and lead to flight and safety.



TEN MINUTES' WARNING.



If you were asleep in a burning house, I can fancy your mother slipping up the stair and into your room, with noiseless step, afraid of frightening you, awaking you with a kiss, saying, "Come to my arms, dear; I must take you elsewhere." Or your father rushes in with heavy step, takes you by the arm, and shakes you out of your slumber, saying, in a tone that admits of no refusal or delay, "Up! make haste! run for your life!" The two were very different in their way; but they had the same end in view-your salvation-and the one was every whit as loving as the other. And so the Holy Spirit is as loving when He speaks terribly and alarmingly, as when He is gentle and tender. He was as loving with the jailor of Philippi, as He was with Lydia, whose heart the Lord so gently opened. Will you not listen to Him as a loving Friend? The Dove, the Dew, the Oil, are the emblems of Him. Oh, I wish you believed in and felt the "love of the Spirit"!

- II. A MOMENTOUS WORD.—"To-day!" This is what the Holy Ghost says. It is a little word, but it has a world of meaning in it. It is one of the great words of the Bible. It may be said to be at once a warning and an invitation,—most pressing—most blessed. If any one should ask how this little word is so momentous, I might answer:—
- 1. It sets before us the time for repenting.—Sin is like a millstone tied about the neck, dragging the soul

down to hell; and every new sin, even in the case of children, is another weight added, to sink the soul the faster. Sin is like a poisoned cup in the sinner's hand, and every new sin is another sip, which, however sweet, is hurrying on the final catastrophe. Sin is rebellion against God, and each new sin is another act of rebellion still further endangering the rebel's head. What is to be done? The sin must have an immediate arrest laid upon it—must be repented of, renounced, forsaken.

Here is a boy who has begun to be in earnest about his soul. He knows he is lost. He would like to be saved. But he would like to keep his sins too, at least for a while. It seems hard to give up the company of his ungodly acquaintances, which he has loved so much, to break off from his old habits, to part with sins to which he has clung all his days. He cannot bring his mind to it. It will be such a wrench. He will have so much to bear. He does not think he can stand it yet: he may be more equal to it by and by. He is just like that lad, who, while working among the waggons on a railway, has had his leg so bruised and crushed, that there is nothing for it but to have the limb taken off. But he cannot make up his mind to part with it. Day after day he asks to have the operation deferred, each day thinking it will not be so difficult the next; though his whole experience has proved that it would have been easier at first, and that the longer the delay, the more difficult it will always become. At length the surgeon, if he is wise and kind, will break in on this state of things, and say, "We cannot tamper with a matter of this kind any longer. It is as much as your life is worth, to put off another day. The choice lies between your limb and your life: which are you prepared to lose? Whatever is to be done, must be done at once. It must be now or never."

And even so must it be with sin, with the evil habit, the forbidden indulgence,—it must go at once. I know how difficult it is. It is compared to cutting off a right hand, or plucking out a right eye. One day, in a distant island of the sea, you might have seen a recently converted heathen, hatchet in hand, evidently bent on some momentous errand. When inquiry is made, he tells that his hand has committed some sin, and that he is going to cut it off, for God's Word says, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." And yet it were easier to lay one's hand upon the block and cut it off, than to give up some of these sins to which we cling; and so the temptation is, to put off the evil day as long as possible. And so the boy, whose case I am dealing with, is always saying, "I'll repent soon. I'll repent one of these days. I'll repent to-morrow." And thus it goes on from day to day, till at length the Holy Ghost breaks in with His great word, and says, "To-day! There must be no more putting off. You have lost too much time already. It is as much as your soul is worth to wait longer. It will cost you your life. Awake! up! out of your sloth! You and your

sin must part, or you must perish." Nay, He, as it were, draws a line round about him, and says, "To-day! Now or never! The disease of sin is in your system; it has got the upper hand, it is laying siege to the heart, it will soon be the death of you. There is no time to lose. However dear the sin, however much you like it, however much you are under its power—you must part with it. You cannot be saved unless you do, and it must be at once—to-day!"

Or there is a girl who has got a sense of her sin, but fears she is too far gone to be saved. She has put off so long, that she believes she is now past hope. She thinks she has lost her opportunity—for she was once in earnest before; but she resisted, and her heart is now too hard to repent, and when she hears the word, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," she is like to give way to utter despair. Nay, but the Holy Ghost saith, "To-day!" It is not too late yet. It may be too late to-morrow; but it is not to-day. Repentance is possible yet. And what an encouragement that word is: how it helps her over difficulties, and bears her along,—that one word—To-day!

2. It sets before us the time for believing.—There is only one way of being saved, and that is by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. But here, too, what delay there is! Here is one trying to make himself better first. He says he is not fit to come to Jesus as he is. His heart is too hard: his sin is too great. He can never come as he is. He must pray a great deal more

first, and read his Bible, and amend his life: he must make himself ready for coming. And yet what is really his case? It is that of a drowning man, struggling with the waves, catching at every straw, but refusing to grasp the rope that is thrown to him, because he is not fit to be saved by it, or is still hoping to find out some way of his own, because he does not want to be obliged to anybody else! He is like that diseased boy who can hardly walk, and yet refuses to see the doctor, or to knock at the Infirmary door, because he is too ill, or does not yet sufficiently feel his need of help. He hopes to go by-and-by. He might not be received as he is. His case is too desperate. He must try to improve himself a little first. He does not see that the worse he is, the greater is the necessity for getting help at once. He does not see that it is his very illness that makes him a fit subject for the healer. Sometimes there is difficulty in the way of visitors and friends getting admission to a public hospital, especially at certain hours of the day. But if an accident occurs, and a man is seriously hurt, or if a man is taken suddenly ill on the street, the door opens straightway, and all that medical skill can do is at his service. I well remember, on getting my arm fractured, and being unable to find other help at hand, when I drove to the Royal Infirmary, how the gate swung open, and in five minutes I was in the hands of kind surgeons, and had the broken bone set. The fractured arm was at once my need and my claim. The sight of it, without a word being said, in my case (as it

would have done in the case of any other), secured instant admittance.

And when the Holy Ghost saith "To-day," it is as if He said, "Now is the time to flee to Jesus, whatever you may be. Now is the time to come to Him, all as you are." It is as if He said, "I know all about Jesus—what He is—what He thinks—how He feels. I know all this far better than you. I am the Revealer of Christ, and my word regarding Him is,—To-day! He will receive you now,—as you are."

Dear young friends, this is the gospel,—an instant salvation for poor sinners. This should make your hearts glad. You say you desire to be saved—to have Jesus as your Saviour—to have your sins all washed away—to get the new heart—to be like those about you who belong to Christ, and are now rejoicing in Him and living for Him. Then look above Christ's door, and see that banner floating in the breeze—a blood-stained banner—and see, in bold characters, the word divinely written, To-DAY! Better news I cannot tell you. It has made many a heart like yours glad. Come to-day! For all you need, look to Jesus to-day!

This is a loving command—it is a tender invitation. Who will come? Who will be saved? Who will set out for heaven? Who will be truly happy? As regards the time for all this, "the Holy Ghost saith, To-day." This is the chief application of the text. It shews the door to be open for returning to God; for coming at once—on the very day—at the very hour in which the

words are spoken,—here, now. Hear it echoing down from heaven; while many, old and young, on earth take it up and echo it back—"To-day! To-day!" "Why will ye doubting stand! Why still delay!" What a happy day it would be, if we heard some of you saying, "Lord, we take thee at Thy word to-day! we come to Thee to-day!"

3. It sets before us the time for working.—I wish now to speak especially to those who are believers. It is a strong reason for repenting and believing now, that, until you have repented and believed, you cannot be a right worker for Christ, or for others. And whenever you become a believer, you must work. You have seen a bee-hive on a summer's day. What a busy scene it is! They are all working at one kind of work or another. Those that cannot do one kind of work do another, and among them the work is overtaken. There is no room for idlers. They have one queen, who does the ruling work, as others do the serving work; they put the drones out. And we should, as Christians, be just like the bees—all doing something.

It is good for *ourselves* to work. Idleness of every kind is evil,—unhealthy for the body, for the spirits, for the soul. The man who works, sleeps most soundly, most enjoys his meals, and gets the benefit of rest. The man who works has, in many ways, the best of it. One cold day in winter, I had a somewhat long journey by railway. Do what we would, we could not keep

ourselves aheat. Wrappers, hot-water pans, and everything else, failed to warm us. As we passed one of the stations, I noticed the porters running hither and thither, with portmanteaus or boxes on their shoulders, all in a fine glow of heat. One of them who passed our window, we regarded almost with envy, as we saw the perspiration dropping from his nose. We who were sitting idle were shivering, while the men who were working were all comfortable and warm.

And so, Christian workers get personal benefit from their work. We need to be doing some work for Christ and for others, to keep our own souls healthy and lively and right. And this is true of *children* as well as of older people. However young, *working children* are the happiest. Their work helps them to pray. It sends them to the throne of grace. It makes them loving, kindly, grateful, and so, joyful children. Working is one grand recipe for happiness.

It is good for others. There are few for whom the youngest of us could not do something. And if we can relieve the distress or sorrow of another,—if we can cheer one heart, or dry the tears from one cheek,—if we can make one friendless person feel that he has a friend in us,—if we can send a weeping one away home rejoicing,—if we can make home happier or holier,—if we can, by our prayers, or our efforts, or our life, get another, like ourselves, brought into the narrow way,—if we can help to send Bibles, and missionaries, and teachers to heathen lands, and encourage and pray for

them when they are there,-if we can bring in any poor wanderer at home,-if we can get even one man or child weaned from sin and turned to God,-what a grand thing it is, -how much worth living for, even were there nothing else! Oh, what a delightful thing it is to work for others' good, in however humble a way!

It is pleasing and honouring to God. God likes to see His people working. It is one proof of their love to Himself. The feeblest efforts of His children come up before Him as a sweet-smelling savour. And if there were nothing else, it should be enough to induce us to put our hand to the work of Christ, and to keep at it, that we shall one day hear that word from His own lips, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye did it unto ME."

But where is all this to be done? Here on earth. And by whom? Not only by the old, but by the young also. And when? Now. Perhaps some of you are purposing to be workers when you are grown up. You will give to the cause of Christ; you will be Sabbathschool teachers or tract distributors; you will visit those who never come to God's house, and try to do them good; you will try not to let a day pass without doing something—but this, only when you are older. You think of doing nothing meanwhile. But "the Holy Ghost saith, To-day;"—not when you are older, but now while yet you are young. I see children can work mischief enough—can do work enough for Satan. Why should they not work for Christ? I read that

in Jerusalem, when the men kindled the fire, and the women kneaded the dough and baked cakes to the queen of heaven, "the children gathered the wood." Is there nothing you could do for Christ or for others? Would you not like to be a youthful worker in Christ's vineyard?

Do not say you will be a worker by-and-by. Oh surely, if you felt the love of Christ, and realised how much He has done for you, you would like to do something that would please Him and be glorifying to Him now. It would make many hearts glad to see you all "ministering children." You may never live to be old. You may not have it in your power to be a worker when you are old. I am sure you would not like to go to heaven without having done something for Christ on earth. You would not like to have to say, like a Christian gentleman who died a few years ago, "I know I'm going to heaven, but I'm going to wear a starless crown," when others like yourselves shall have crowns like the brightness of the firmament. The kind of work which the Lord now asks of you, can only be done here—not in heaven. There is no need or possibility of doing such work there; and if you should be early taken away, you would never have the privilege and the honour of doing such work at all.

Can you think of so many perishing all around you, without your doing anything for them? Long ago, in England, a man and his eight sons were condemned to die for having taken part in a rebellion. Leaving

them prisoners in York Castle, his daughter went to London, pled with Oueen Elizabeth, and obtained a royal pardon. A messenger was despatched with all haste, and charged to make frequent changes of horses, so as, if possible, to arrive in time to prevent the execution; but before he reached York, the father and seven of his sons had been executed,—he only arrived in time to save the eighth. "Oh," you say, "what a pity but he had arrived sooner! What a pity but there had been railways and telegraphs in those days, and then they might all have been spared!" And just so would I say to you. You may grow up and work when you are older, and may do some good. But perhaps it will be too late then for some whom you might have saved, had you begun sooner. There will be room to say, "Oh why were you so long in beginning? Why did you not come sooner?"

Can you do or give nothing for the heathen now? In one of the distant and beautiful islands in the South Seas, there was a happy gathering of children. They were all dressed in white, and were happy as could be. One old man was looking on with tears. His thoughts went back to his nineteen children, whom, one after another, he had killed, not knowing any better; and when he saw such a happy group, he thought his children might have been there too, had the gospel only come sooner, and bitterly he asked the missionary, "Why were you so long in coming? Why did you not come in time to save my children

too?" No wonder that when we speak of putting off our working, when there is so much work to do, the Holy Ghost should say, urgently and repeatedly, "To-day!"

It does not matter how young or how poor you may be; Jesus expects you to do something for Him. If you don't know of any work suited for you, go to Him and ask—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

And so it is as regards giving for Christ. I fear we are far behind in this respect. I have heard of one contribution of 10s. 4d. for Missions, from a little boy who died at the age of six years. I have read of another boy, who was both lame and poor. He started a little trade of wooden knives and tooth-picks, and laid aside what he earned, for Christ, so that, when he died, in his box was found the sum of 18s. which he had saved for the cause of his Master. There is no work in the grave, therefore do it now. Here, too, the Spirit's call is "To-day!" Jesus said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." What a sad thought it will be, "I might have done something for Christ, if I had only begun in time!"

4. It sets before us the *best* time for repenting, for believing, for working—"to-day." Not when you are older, not when you are better qualified, but just now, immediately—to-day. The present is not only a *good* time, but the *best* time that will ever be, for your coming to Christ, and so for working for Christ. The heart

can only get harder with the lapse of time. Some of you have been at the sea-side, spending your summer holidays. You must have noticed the tide gradually coming in till the shore was covered; and when it was at its full, how eager the fishermen were to get their boats afloat; and how easy it was then, as compared with what it was when the tide was back. The tide may be said to be in with you now; it is full tide; it is the time for getting your own boat afloat, and helping others with theirs: and for your encouragement, and for your warning, ere it go back, "the Holy Ghost saith, To-day"!

5. It sets forth the time for repenting, for believing, for working, as very short: a day—this day—to-day. I find Paul saying solemnly, "Brethren, I say unto you, the time is short,"—the whole time;—how much more a little part of it—a day! You may fancy you have plenty of time to attend to other things first, and then to see to these. You say you must enjoy yourselves, and see what the world can do for you. You must have your lessons now, and your play. Or you must learn your business first; and when you have got settled down in houses of your own, you will seek the Lord, and work for the Lord. Nay; but here again, "the Holy Ghost saith, To-day"! It is slipping past, and will soon be over. "For what is your life? It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little while and vanisheth away;" and what then must be a day? We may continue careless, inactive, asleep; but the day is not sleeping; it

is hurrying away, and will soon be gone. The other day, in visiting the Art Treasures Exhibition, one could not but be struck with this,—how the things exhibited there had all outlived the men to whom they had once belonged. The armour in which they encased themselves, the weapons with which they fought, the cups out of which they drank, the books they read, the very clothes they wore, have all long survived them, and give a touching meaning to what the Holy Ghost saith, "To-day." Oh make haste, there is no time to lose.

6. It sets forth what may be the only time for repenting, for believing, for working. It is the only time promised. It is the only time that belongs to us. "To-day" alone is ours; to-morrow is God's. That passage seems always to me one of the most overawing in all Scripture, "Oh that thou hadst heard, even thou, in this thy day!" As if every one had his "day,"—his "to-day,"—and when that is lost, it is lost for ever. "Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." This may be the only "to-day" we shall ever see. We may see to-morrow, but the Holy Ghost may no longer then be saying, "To-day!" He may have left us. We may be hardened. His patience may be exhausted. It is said, "He limiteth a certain day, saying, To-day." Not using it as He would have us to do, it may be our last opportunity. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Oh think, each day as it comes, "This may be my last day. What if it should?" Remember Esau, who lost his day, and found no place of repentance, though

he sought it carefully with tears. Remember the foolish virgins who came, indeed, but too late,—"the door was shut." It may be so with some of you. I cannot tell in whose case this shall be; but this may be the only "to-day" you shall ever have, and hence the need of using it aright.

III., and very briefly, The Lesson. I. Value to-day.—How little we think of a day; and yet how precious! how invaluable! Regard it and treat it as you do other precious things. Though short, it has sufficed to save many like you, and it may suffice to save you. We may well say what a daughter told me she heard her dying mother, a Christian woman, saying a few days ago. It was Sabbath morning, and when the early sunshine lighted up her room, after a long night of restlessness and suffering, she was overheard saying, "Dear day!" O yes, it should be a "dear day" to us all, for it is the "day of grace," the "day of salvation."

- 2. Improve to-day.—There is a saying, "Make hay when the sun shines." We should carry out the spirit of that word. If the day is so precious and so short, then surely we should make the very most of it. Do not waste it. Spend it as in the sight of God. Lay it out as a steward of God.
- 3. Remember that the night cometh.—Every day has its night, and so has this one. The day is far spent. Whether you are improving it or not, it is going away, and the night will soon be on. How soon and how

suddenly the night shall come, we cannot tell. Oh to be as ready as some have been, who have recently been taken from us! In the case of one beloved servant of God, who had but eight hours' warning, we find him hopefully saying to those he was leaving behind, "We shall meet at the right hand. I am at rest for ever. I am quietly going home." He had begun to improve his "to-day" in early life. Another devoted man of God, who was awakened by sudden pain in the middle of the night, had only time to say, "The Lord is with me; He will also be with you," and then he passed away to where there is no night, but an eternal day. Oh to be found like these! "Be ye therefore ready also; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh"

"Time is earnest,
Passing by:
Death is earnest,
Drawing nigh.
Sinner! wilt thou trifling be?
Time and Death appeal to thee.

"Life is earnest:
When 'tis o'er,
Thou returnest
Never more.
Soon to meet Eternity,
Wilt thou never serious be?

"Heaven is earnest:
Solemnly
Float its voices
Down to thee.

O thou mortal, art thou gay, Sporting through thine earthly day?

"Hell is earnest:
Fiercely roll
Burning billows
Near thy soul.
Woe for thee! if thou abide
Unredeem'd, unsanctified!

"God is earnest:

Kneel and pray
Ere thy season
Pass away—
Ere He set his judgment throne,
Vengeance ready, mercy gone.

"Christ is earnest,
Bids thee 'come!'
Paid thy spirit's
Priceless sum.
Wilt thou spurn thy Saviour's love,
Pleading with thee from above?

"Oh, be earnest!
Loitering
Thou wilt perish:
Lingering
Be no longer—rise and flee;
Lo! thy Saviour waits for thee!"

Linued.

GOD and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we praise Thee that we have not been left to grope in the dark for life and salvation. We thank Thee for Thy blessed Word. We thank Thee for the revelation of Christ. We thank Thee for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Heavenly Teacher, open the eyes of the spiritually blind. Thou who didst command the light to shine out of darkness, shine in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. O for grace to hear and live! O for grace to hear and learn! Let Thy great word, "TO-DAY!" come home with power to each of our hearts. Help us to take it as our life-motto. In closing with Christ, in resisting evil, in meeting temptation, in breaking off from old habits, in discharging difficult duty, in obeying Thy commands and doing Thy will, let us not say "To-morrow!" when Thou sayest "To-day!" Help us to carry out our good resolutions at once. Help us to work for Christ, and for others' good now. Use us in Thy service, however humbly, while we are yet young; and as we grow older, make us able and willing to do more for Thee. Let us be afraid of losing opportunities either of getting good or of doing good. Help us to work while it is day, because the night cometh when none can work. Give preparing grace to any whose day may be about to close. Make us ready for the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus. All that we ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.





which of all our friends to save us,
Could or would have shed his
blood?

But our Jesus died to have us Reconciled in Him to God; His was boundless love indeed! Jesus is a Friend in need. 3 Oh, for grace our hearts to soften! Teach us, Lord, at length to love; We, alas! forget too often What a Friend we have above; But when home our souls are brought,

We shall love Thee as we ought.



for older people, without which they cannot get on. Money, education, food, clothing, health,—they must have all these, more or less. But there are times when none of these will suffice, when all the money in the world, and all that money can get, will not serve the turn. There are times when, above all things else, we long to see the face of A FRIEND,—to have him beside us,—to have hold of his hand,—to tell him all that we are thinking and feeling,—to get his sympathy,—to get him to weep with us in our sorrow, or to rejoice with us in our joy. Nothing in all the world is to be compared to having such a tried, dear, trusty, loving friend.

HERE are many things needful for children, as

I might mention many occasions when we feel the need of such a friend. Sometimes children *lose themselves*: they lose their way, in town or country, and as they get into strange and unknown places, and among strange and unknown people, they get bewildered and frightened,

and know not what to do. The lost one is taken into some house, or to the Police Office, to see whether any one will come and claim him. A kindly policeman is sometimes the nearest approach he can have to a friend, and often the best thing he can do is to cry himself to sleep. Have you ever been present, in such a case, when a father or mother or other friend at length appeared? What a joyful meeting it was! How the little one wept for very joy,—how he flew to his mother's arms, and lay in her lap, like a little bird in its nest!

Sometimes children are taken ill, when they are away from home. It was all very well, so long as they were strong and healthy; they could play and romp about with other children, and be happy as the day was long, among strangers. But when they became sick, and had some burning fever or other ailment, and were restless and weary, how home was longed for, or some one from home; and when, after writing or telegraphing to some dear one to come off by the very first train, it was announced that the one so long looked for had come at last, and the door was opened, and the friend was ushered into the bedroom, and the two were left alone, —I shall not attempt to describe the scene!

Sometimes children get into a scrape, as we call it,—into a difficulty, innocently and unintentionally, or otherwise. The little culprit pleads innocence, or has some excuse to make, but it is all in vain, and everything seems to go against him, when a friend appears who

knows him and loves him, and takes his part, and sees that he gets justice, and in due time takes him away with him to his home.

In all these cases, and in many others that might be mentioned, the heart yearns for a friend. That is the need that is most deeply felt, and the getting of the need supplied, fills the heart with truest joy. Now we want a better friend than the best of an earthly kind. There are things that no earthly friend can do for us. There are places where no earthly friend can go with us. There are times when none but a Divine and Heavenly Friend can meet our need. Such a Friend I am now going to speak to you about, to commend Him to you—to introduce you to Him—to try to persuade you to take Him to be your Friend, so that you may have Him as yours, from this time all your life long. Proverbs xviii. 24:—

"There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

It is right that I should say, at the outset, that it is not the Lord Jesus who, in the first instance, is referred to here. The wise man who wrote these words is addressing himself to those who have friends, and would like to keep them. He says, "a man that hath friends must shew himself friendly." He must be kindly with them,—treat them as friends,—trust them,—act the part of a friend to them. And then, as a reason for doing

this, he says, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." It is as if he said, "Friends are worth the having; their friendship is worth some pains being taken in order to keep it." There have been cases in which friends have stuck more closely to one than his own brothers have done,—have been kinder, have acted more a brother's part, have put themselves more about to help, have done what brothers would not do, have given their money and time and strength, have denied themselves, have exposed themselves to danger, have nursed in cases of infectious disease, have risked their very life. What our text says, therefore, is true of human friends,—describes them, and furnishes a reason why we should value them, and do all that is right and proper to retain them.

But if it applies to any, it applies to the Lord Jesus. It is most of all true of Him. The best of earthly friends comes far short of Him. If ever it could be said of any friend that he "sticketh closer than a brother," it may be said of Christ. Now, what I wish to do, in the present address, is to shew you this,—to prove it to you. I shall try to do this, under these five remarks:—

I. He loves you better. II. He does more for you. III. He bears more with you. IV. He is nearer to you. V. He never leaves you. In other words, I mean to prove that Jesus "sticketh closer than a brother," in respect of His greater love, — kindness, — patience, — nearness,—steadfastness.

I. The text is true of Jesus, in respect of His Love.— He loves you better than a brother does. A brother is very near, and should be very dear. Brought up on the same mother's lap, playing around the same fireside, lying in the same little bed, the object of the same love and care,—a brother's love should be very warm and tender. It seems one of the strangest and most dreadful things that could be, when brothers do not love. One of the earliest Bible pictures that we became acquainted with, and that is written on our memories to this day, is that of Cain rising up against his brother Abel, and killing him. You remember how you felt when you first saw that! Of all murderers, you thought that of abrother the worst. Others of these early pictures which we shall not soon forget, as we saw them in the big family Bible, were those of Joseph's brethren, plotting against their young brother, stripping him of his coat of many colours, when he came to ask after their welfare,-first putting him down into a pit, and then selling him to a company of passing Ishmaelites to be a slave in Egypt, away from his old father and his dear home. You say,—"For brothers to do that to a brother, -how dreadful!"

I know nothing more unnatural and shocking, than for brothers to be jealous and suspicious, and envious of, and unkind to each other. I have heard of an old grandmother who used to go into the nursery at night, after the children had gone to bed, saying to them, as her last word for the night, as she gave them a kiss, and bade them good night, "'Gree, bairns, 'gree!" Oh, it is a beautiful sight, when, younger or older, earlier or later in life, the *bairns agree*. Many will recognise the simple and homely lines that follow:—

"Whatever brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home;
Where sisters dwell, and brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come.

"Birds in their little nests agree;
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family,
Fall out, and chide, and fight.

"Hard names at first, and threatening words,
That are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs and naked swords,
To murder and to death."

There are many beautiful stories of brothers' and sisters' love,—how they have given up all for each other,—have clung to each other throughout a long life,—and have scarcely been able to survive one the other's death. But the deepest and purest love of brother to brother has its limit. Our little friends sometimes shew us how much they love us. The other day, a little boy held up his hands as high as he could hold them, and said he loved me "all that!" Well, there is a measuring of the best human love; there is a limit beyond which it cannot go. However great it may be, there is an "all that" within which it comes.

But it is not so with the love of Jesus. No language can express it,—no figures can give its measure. When you have said "all that," you have but begun,—you have but touched the edge of it. It is all that, and infinitely more.

The ocean, at its deepest, has a bottom, if there were only a long enough line to reach it. But the love of Jesus is an ocean without a bottom, -an ocean without a shore. Paul, who knew as much about it as most. says-"the height and depth and length and breadth . . . of the love of Christ;—it passeth knowledge." One day a gentleman was going out to ride. His horse was at the door, and his little boy and girl were standing there, waiting to see him mount. As he was mounting, and about to ride away, the little boy called out, "Good-bye, dear papa; I love you thirty miles long!" His little sister followed with her "Good-bye, dear papa;" and added, " You will never ride to the end of my love!" Now that is what Jesus might say. "My love has no measure. It has no end. It passeth knowledge."

About the highest measure of a brother's love is—"as himself." "Thou shalt love thy neighbour,"—and so thy brother,—"as thyself." That is about the furthest length any of us can go. But Jesus loves us—shall I not say—better than He loved Himself. Hear what He Himself says about it: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Now that is what He has done. That is the

measure of His love. That is the grand proof of His love. We have loving brothers and sisters among us, -many of them dearly loving. I have sometimes proposed to take away one of the little brothers or sisters in a family, and the others have held by the little one and wept, lest I should carry him off, even though there would have been plenty left behind. They could not bear the thought of parting. But what brother among us would give his life for his brother or sister? What sister would die for her brother? When the little sufferer is sore distressed, tossing about, so hot and thirsty and sick and pained, getting no sleep, not caring for food, and having bitter medicine to take,would you be willing to change places, and lie down to suffer and die instead? Would the most loving of you all do this?

And yet, this is what Jesus does,—what He has done. So Paul says: "Who loved me and gave Himself for me." Only think of what He was, and of what He became;—of His leaving His home in heaven, and the Father's Bosom in which from eternity He had dwelt, and coming into this world of ours, to want and poverty and sorrow and death,—to be a helpless little child—a suffering man—a dying Saviour!

"But see from His place,
In infinite grace
He comes, and appears here below;
He leaves all His store,
And stoops to be poor,
Submitting to want and to woe.

"No love is like His,
Unequalled it is
By that of a mother or friend:
What tongue cannot teach,
What thought cannot reach,
'Tis love without measure or end."

He is the very embodiment of the love of God, and "God is love." Christ is love. His heart is a well of love. His whole life was a life of love. What was said long ago, might have been said ten thousand times since, "Behold, how He loved!"

II. The text is true of Jesus, in respect of His KINDNESS.—He is kinder to you, does more for you, than a brother. Kindness is the outcome of love—the result of love—the expression of love. Some friends have done much for us. Their love to us has been so great, that they grudged nothing that they could give or do or suffer for us. You may remember when you were ill, and nobody would come near you-besides the doctor-but your mother or aunt or sister; how she watched and waited on you night and day,-never took off her clothes,-never got a night's sleep for weeks or months, just lay down for an hour with her clothes on, and whenever you coughed or moved, she started up in a moment and was at your side. She and the doctor, between them, with God's help, brought you through your illness. What kindness is like hers? You will never see the like again. And yet Jesus has done far more than any mother ever did. His greatest act of

kindness was—giving Himself. And yet besides that, what has He not done?

Some people have made great sacrifices for others' good, have done much, and suffered much, and exposed themselves to the greatest dangers. A few weeks ago, I saw the picture of a missionary, who had gone to preach the gospel to the heathen, overtaken by a lion, that had sprung upon him; and there he lay, with the lion's paw on him, holding him just as a cat would hold a helpless mouse, so that any moment, if he should stir, might be his last. In another diagram, I saw a missionary band attacked by furious buffaloes. A third described a missionary—the godly and devoted Henry Marsden of New Zealand-standing face to face with savage men, armed with clubs and spears, having nothing but an open Bible in his hands. These men thus went forth with their life in their hand, as we say, in their love to others' souls and desire for their good. But what was all that, compared with the kindness of Jesus?

Friends sometimes do a great deal for friends. I daresay many of you have heard of one who, condemned to die, was eager to visit his home to arrange his affairs and bid his family farewell. He got permission to go, on condition that another should take his place; the terms being, that if he should not return by the day appointed, his friend should die in his stead. And such a loving friend was found, who took his place, and all but died in his room.*

^{*} Damon and Pythias.

Now that is a faint picture of what Jesus has done. He has taken our place: He has become our Substitute, and as such, has died in our room. He has taken the sinner's place, and given His place to the sinner. That is what the redeemed celebrate in heaven, and will sing to all eternity: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain: for He was slain and hath redeemed us to God by His blood." "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own precious blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." That is what each believer may well make his song on earth.

What has He not done for us? What has He not given to us? Sometimes, in calling on a friend, you are shewn into a room, and while you are waiting, you look at the books that are lying on the table. They seem all to be presents, and all from the same person. The same handwriting is on each of them. And if you were to ask about many things besides, "Where did you get these?" it would be to get the same reply, "All were the gifts of the same kind and loving friend." The same might be said of Jesus. You had once a remarkable deliverance — a hairbreadth escape from danger-from death. To whom do you owe it? To Jesus. You had once a wonderful recovery from sickness that seemed to be unto death. You were raised up as from the very grave. From whom did it come? From Jesus. Whatever I look at, that belongs to you

it bears the mark of Jesus' hand—it came from Him—it was His gift: you owe all to Him. I often see presents from brothers to sisters—from friends to friends—precious and much valued gifts of love. But never was there brother or friend who gave such gifts as Jesus.

III. The text is true of Jesus, in respect of His Patience.—He bears with you, more than a brother. Most people weary of us, when we go to them very often, for help of any kind. They lose patience with us. They say, "How are you coming so often? Don't come again for a long time." Jesus never complains,—never wearies,—never tires,—never says, "Are you there again? Are you back already?" He says, "Come as often as you like." He says, "Come back, again and again and again." There is none so patient as He.

Sometimes it is very difficult to have patience with people. When friends grow old and frail, or weak and ill, or nervous, or peevish and fretful, it is sometimes not easy to bear with them. When friends become deaf,—when we have to repeat the same thing over and over,—how impatient we are apt to be. When people are lame, and cannot go along fast enough for us, and we are kept behind to bear them company and to help them on, it is sometimes very trying to patience. It is often difficult to bear with stupid people. Bunyan, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," mentions "a young woman whose name was Dull." There are many people, old

and young, whose name is "Dull,"—or might be,—so slow to learn either common things or higher things. The kindest and most patient of friends are apt to get out of heart with us, and are tempted to give us up in despair. But it is not so with Jesus.

Children, too, are sometimes very trying,—so wilful and wayward and fitful, or so provoking otherwise, that the patience of the best gets exhausted. It is not so with Jesus. He was once a child, and He has not forgotten His child-life on earth, as many of us have done. Might I not reverently say of Him, what an old Christian lady once said to me of herself,—He has "a young heart"? I objected, some years ago, to some passages in a favourite book, which I thought were fitted to be hurtful to young readers; and my remarks were sent on by the publishers to the authoress in a distant land. In writing back and defending what she had written, fancying me to be some old doctor of divinity, she said, "I suppose he has forgotten that he was once young himself." Now Jesus never forgets that He was once young, and He understands, and knows, and bears with those who are now what He once was Himself. Herein He differs from many, even good people. There was an old minister who had very little of the patience of which I have been speaking, especially when his little grandchildren managed to get into his study, and deranged his papers; and many a severe reprimand did he give them. One day the following conversation took place. The mother had

been speaking to her boy about heaven, and as he stood beside her, he said, "Ma, I don't want to go to heaven." "Don't want to go to heaven, my son?" "No, ma; I'm sure I don't." "Why not, my son?" "Why, grandpa will be there, won't he?" "Why, yes; I hope he will." "Well, as soon as he sees us, he will come scolding along and say, 'Whew, whew! what are these boys here for?' I don't mean to go to heaven, if grandpa is going there." How different those who know Jesus at all, know *Him* to be!

I find another, a little girl, saying, "Perhaps when the angels bring me into heaven, Jesus will say, 'Oh, she is a little girl, take her into another room!" But by and by, she came to know Him better, and then she thought differently of Christ and His feelings towards children. "She had heard the story of Zaccheus read, with great interest. When it was finished, she eagerly asked, 'Had Zaccheus any little children?' 'I don't know. Perhaps he had. It is very likely indeed that he had; but the Bible does not mention them.' 'Oh, I hope he had. It would be such a happy day for them. Mrs Zaccheus would say, "Your father is late for dinner to-day." Then they would run to the window and watch for him. Soon they would say, "Here comes papa and a gentleman with him "-(lowering her voice, and speaking sadly)-no, not a gentleman, for Jesus looked like a poor, sorrowing man, when he was upon the earth. Then Zaccheus would say, "I have brought the Lord Jesus Christ home to dinner!" Oh how

surprised they would be, and how pleased!' And she bounced across the room, in the gladness of her own heart, at picturing the joy of these children 1800 years ago."*

Is not this just what we have, in the case of the disciples, who, when mothers brought young children, rebuked them? "But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them."

Sometimes even brothers tire. If one is long sick, or out of employment, even brothers grow weary of helping. If one is ill-behaved, and after promising to do better, just falls into his old ways again, even brothers have their patience worn out. And perhaps, in the end, they let him go to the poorhouse, or to prison, or, as not knowing well what to do, send him off to some foreign country, to be out of the way-not to trouble them any more. And so we need One better than a brother-more patient than a brother,-One that "sticketh closer than a brother": and this we have in Christ. In learning your lessons, how often brother tires of helping brother. What a matter it is, to get a patient teacher, who will bear with our dullness and stupidity, and encourage and help us on. And that is what Jesus is, and does.

^{*} I have taken the liberty of inserting this and a previous extract from an exquisite little volume, printed for private circulation.

If anything could win the hearts of children, it should be the patience and gentleness of Jesus—

"I cannot feel Thee touch my hand,
With pressure light and mild,
To check me as my mother did,
When I was but a child.

"But I have felt Thee in my thoughts,
Fighting with sin for me;
And when my heart loves God, I know
That love is all from Thee."

The patient sheep—the gentle lamb—is the emblem of Him. Who would not be drawn to such a patient Saviour?

IV. The text is true of Jesus, in respect of His Nearness.—He is nearer to you than a brother. A brother is very near: nearer than a cousin or uncle or any other. He gets very close to you, so as to have your confidence, your trust, your love. He is called a blood relation,—the same blood flowing in the veins of both. And yet Jesus comes nearer to you than a brother. He is a nearer relation in the case of all His redeemed people. In Old Testament times, the only one who could be a "redeemer" was the nearest of kin—the very nearest friend that one had (see Ruth, chap. iv.). That was meant to bring out the nearness of Christ's relationship to all who are His.

And as He is nearer in His relationship, so He

comes closer to you than any other. I once had an opportunity of seeing the original of the famous fresco of Leonardo da Vinci, "The Last Supper," painted in oil in 1497, on the wall of an underground chamber at Milan. What struck one most, in gazing on it, was,—the posture and look of John, as the disciple whom Jesus loved, leaning his head on Jesus' bosom. Only one disciple could be so favoured then. And yet that is the place which He gives to all His friends now. He says, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." He is so near as to be always within reach. He is never out of the way. In every sense it is true that Jesus is nearer than any brother.

V. The text is true of Jesus, in respect of His STEADFASTNESS, — His constancy: He never changes, never leaves you.—Children are very fitful in their friendship,—alike in the making of friends and the leaving of them. And nothing is more trying than the changefulness of friends; those who used to be intimate with us, growing cold and distant. Those who were at the same school,—who sat on the same bench,—who learned and repeated their lessons together,—played together,—walked together,—now pass each other on the street. Some have risen a little in the world, or are a little better connected, and by and by, their friendship drops. Or you have said, or are supposed to have said or done something against them, and the breach is never healed.

But Jesus never gives up any friend. He never changes. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." "Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end." He says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." He is an ever-lasting Friend.

By and by, the friends we now have, will all pass away. One by one they are dropping off, leaving us, never to come back again. We see our beloved ones getting older and frailer,-their hair getting white and their limbs feeble, -not able to do what once they did. Sooner or later they must all leave us ;-our dearest and best must go, and what then? Jesus still remains and says, "I will never leave you." By and by, we shall grow old, and people may tire of us, and almost weary for us to be away. Jesus will never tire of us. He says, "Even to old age I am He, and in hoar hairs I will carry you." By and by we shall come to die. We shall have to go down into the cold river, and enter it all alone. No friend will be able to go further with us than the river's brink. Not one of all our friends. except Jesus, has died, and so knows what death is, or can accompany us through it; but He can, and He will. "Even in the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art with me." Then, most of all, it comes to be true, "There is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." By and by, we shall have to stand at the bar of judgment. That is coming. We must appear there. Who shall appear for us? Who can? Jesus. Oh we shall

need a friend then, that "sticketh closer than a brother." By and by, the resurrection morning will come. We shall rise from the grave. Then, too, we shall need a friend that "sticketh closer than a brother." And so in heaven, and throughout a long eternity, He says, "I will never leave thee." He will be a friend for EVER.

To all who have accepted Him, let me say, in closing,—since He is such a Friend to you, you must be friends to Him. What an honour to be His friends! What an honour would Joseph's brethren think it, to be friends to one who was Ruler over all Egypt! What are you going to do for this Friend? How are you going to shew your value for His friendship? your love to Him? your trust? your thankfulness?

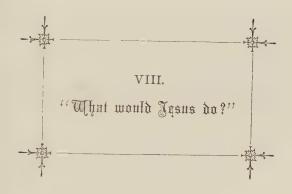
And let me ask all others,—Will you not enter into friendship with Christ to-day? He offers to be your Friend now. "The hand of Divine friendship," says one, "is held out to every one of you." He invites you. He is offering to be yours to-day. The friends of Christ all invite you to come and be one of them: "Come with us, and we will do thee good." Who will take Him? What do you say to His offer? "Wilt thou go with this Man?" Now is the time to choose Him and say, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend." You cannot be happy without Him. The want of that Friend nothing can make up for. Having Him, you have heaven begun!

- "Oh come to the merciful Saviour who calls you,
 Oh come to the Lord who forgives and forgets;
 Though dark be the fortune on earth that befalls you,
 There's a bright home above where the sun never sets.
- "Oh come then to Jesus, whose arms are extended To fold His dear children in closest embrace; Oh come, for your exile will shortly be ended, And Jesus will shew you His beautiful face.
- "Yes, come to the Saviour, whose mercy grows brighter The longer you look at the depth of His love; And fear not, 'tis Jesus, and life's cares grow lighter, As you think of the home and the glory above.
- "Come, come to His feet, and lay open your story
 Of suffering and sorrow, of guilt and of shame;
 For the pardon of sin is the crown of His glory,
 And the joy of our Lord to be true to His name."

Phanten.

O LORD JESUS, we adore Thee, as our Divine Friend. We praise Thee for all the proofs of Thy friendship which Thou hast given us. We praise Thee for Thy love, and kindness, and patience, and nearness, and steadfastness. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: this is what Thou hast done for us. Help us to prize Thy friendship more. Make us loving and true-hearted friends to Thee. Enable us to shew our love to Thee by our self-denying and devoted service. May we never be ashamed of Thee, our best Friend. Suffer us not to do anything that would grieve Thee, or bring reproach on Thy name. We commend to Thee all who are friendless,—all who need a Friend. Be a Friend to the poor, and the sick, and the aged, to all fatherless or motherless children, to all who are in any distress or sorrow. Say to them, "I am Jesus your Friend." Be our Friend in all time of trouble, and in the hour of death, and take us at last to Thy Heavenly Home. Help us, even now, to learn to sing the song of the saved :-- Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.







- 2 With willing heart and hand, Your daily task pursue; Work for the day wears on, Ask—"What would Jesus do?"
- 3 Be gentle, ev'n when wronged; Revenge and pride subdue; When to forgive seems hard, Ask—"What would Jesus do?"
- 4 Be brave to do the right,
 And scorn to be untrue;
 When fear would whisper "Yield!"
 Ask—"What would Jesus do?"
- 5 Give, with a full, free hand,—
 God freely gives to you,—
 And check each selfish thought
 With—"What would Jesus do?"
- 6 Then let the golden thread,
 Woven your life-work through,
 Reflecting heaven's own light,
 Be—"What would Jesus do?"



F I were to ask, "What are you, as regards your religion?" you would answer, "We are Christians. Is it not as Christian children that we give our money for missions, and send the gospel to Jews and Mahometans and Heathens?" Well, you profess to be such. You bear the name of Christ. You wear His livery, just as a servant does his master's. You wear His uniform, just as a soldier does his Queen's. You profess to be the disciples of Christ -the friends of Christ-the servants of Christ-the soldiers of Christ. And the first question to be asked, is, "Are you really what you profess to be?" To be a Christian is to be Christ's—is to belong to Him—to be washed in His Blood-to be covered with His Righteousness-to have Christ as your great Sacrifice and Substitute. This lies at the very foundation; and you know that if the foundation is wrong, everything else must be wrong.

But, to be a Christian implies also that you are like

Christ—that He is your Lord and Master, whom you consult about everything, and seek to obey in everything, always asking, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?"—that He is your Pattern and Example, to whom you are ever looking, whenever you are in doubt or difficulty about anything, asking the question, and regarding the answer as decisive, "What would Jesus do?"

I have an article which, in size and general appearance, resembles a watch. It has a face and hands, and can be carried in the pocket, not to tell the time of day, but to serve as a weather-glass and thermometer and compass, all in one, indicating what we call in Scotland the "airts"—the points of the compass—north, south, east, and west. It is called an aneroid. When visiting those most interesting islands, Orkney and Shetland, I found friends who had to be much at sea carrying this useful little instrument in their pockets, that they might judge as to the weather and know how to steer their boat.

If you were overtaken by a mist, even on the best known ground, you could not find your way, or know to what hand to turn. But in this case, too, the needle always points to the north, so that if you knew the direction in which you were going, this would always keep you right.

I have heard a friend tell how his brother, out in the prairie in Australia, in an unknown region, without a single landmark to guide him, by means of his little pocket-compass, kept pushing on in the one direction,

and at length, after days of solitary riding, arrived safely at his destination. Now, Christian children, and Christian men and women are often at a loss to know the way of duty, to know what they should, and what they should not do, in regard to many things,—the work they should engage in, the books they should read, the places to which they should go, the company they should keep, the amusements they should take part in, and many things besides. They cannot always have a wise and faithful friend beside them who might advise; they have not always the opportunity of retiring to pray or consult the Bible, or even to think. They are often called to decide or act on the spur of the moment, and therefore some short and easily applied rule of conduct is of the last importance. I would like to supply such with a kind of spiritual mariner's compass, the needle of which would always be found to point in the right direction, a single look at which, or thought about which, would go far to point out the way, and to indi cate what is right and what is wrong. The whole word of God has been given to us as a guide for our life, and we should constantly be studying it, that we may be "thoroughly furnished" for life's journey. But as we have not the Bible always beside us, and even if we had, might not always be able to put our finger at once upon what we wanted, I shall give you out of the Bible a guide which, if honestly and constantly consulted, will be as helpful to you as the compass is to the mariner. It is not a text of Scripture, but the

question or motto which you see over the mantel-piece in the woodcut below—

"What would Jesus do?"



This will be the subject of my present address, and instead of taking one text for the whole address, as I have hitherto done, I shall take one for each head. I wish each of you to make this your daily, hourly question, especially in all matters about which you are in any doubt or difficulty. It will be found to have an application to every position in which you can be

placed,—to every matter that can come before you; and if you wish, you will soon learn to make that application for yourselves. The full consideration of such a subject would lead us into a very large field, and so I must limit myself to a few particulars, as specimens, which you can multiply and follow out in detail for yourselves.

The question bears on the matter of-

I. DILIGENCE.—"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day" (John ix. 4). This has to do with our work, and diligence in it-common, every-day work,-school work, home work, business work, or more special work for God. It frowns upon all idleness, indolence, inattention, procrastination. Halfread books, half-learned lessons, half-written letters, half-done work of any kind, will not stand the test. The habit of putting off the preparation of lessons till the last moment, and then hurrying over and learning them imperfectly,—the habit of beginning an essay or a letter, and letting it lie for weeks before it is taken up again,—the habit of deferring some piece of work which we do not care very much about, and making the merest trifle an excuse for flying off to something else, is evil and dangerous, in many ways. I have known an unfinished piece of needlework occasion the loss of a precious life. The needle was left in the unfinished seam, the handkerchief or towel was put into the tub to be washed, and while it was being washed,

the needle ran into the finger and could not be taken out again; and when one finger after another had been cut off, and excruciating pain had been suffered, the shock given to the system was so great, that, ere many days had passed, the patient died. It might have been said that a piece of unfinished work was the cause of death. Now Jesus left no unfinished work. He left nothing half done. He finished whatever he began. There was no unfinished journey,-no unfinished sermon, in His case. He could say regarding everything which He undertook, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." He went about continually doing good. There was no shadow of indolence about Him. He never wasted time or opportunities. And when you are tempted to be lazy, or off-putting, or careless about the duty of the hour, it would surely startle and rebuke you if some one were to whisper into your ear, "What would JESUS do?"

II. TRUTHFULNESS.—"Neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Pet. ii. 22). I cannot think of lying Christians. I can hardly fancy that any of those whom I address, can be in the habit of telling downright, open, and deliberate, unblushing lies,—of saying Yes, when they know they should say No. But sometimes you are tempted to equivocate, to deceive, to pretend to be what you are not, to speak or act or look what is not exactly true, trying to pass for being clever or rich or high-born or godly, when you are not,—when you

know that you are not. Jesus never dreamt of doing such a thing. He avoided everything that had the look of guile, whatever inducement there might seem to be to practise it. And how should any one who bears His name dare to be, in this respect, other than He was? How should such a one venture to speak or act even a half-lie or a quarter-lie? A slight deviation from truth might enable you to gain some advantage, or escape some punishment. A little "guile" is all that you could be accused of. You ask, "What shall I do?" You should ask, "What would Jesus do?"

III. PURITY.—"Who is holy, harmless, undefiled" (Heb. vii. 26). This includes purity of heart—of look—of word—of conduct; and has many and important practical bearings. What books or papers may I read? What pictures may I look at? What amusements may I take part in? What stories, or songs, or jests, or conversations, may I listen to? This must decide all these questions—"What would Jesus do?" Would He read this book or paper, or look at this picture, or laugh at this coarse though clever joke, or join in this conversation, or allow His thoughts to dwell on such objects as those on which mine are now dwelling? For if my heart tells me that He could not and would not, then I am not at liberty to do what He would have felt Himself shut out from doing.

There are few things at present more important,

than that our young people should grow up with a love of moral purity,—with a holy fear and hatred of everything of an opposite character. They cannot come in contact with anything that is impure, without a black mark being left behind. Some one tells of a father who wished to teach this lesson to his child, requesting herall dressed in white, as she was—to take up a piece of coal that was lying on the hearth-rug, and throw it into the fire. She looked at him inquiringly for a moment, then at her white hands and white dress, and then at the black piece of coal—as much as to say, "Do you really mean it, papa?" Reading her thoughts, he said, "It will not burn you." "No," was her reply, "but it will blacken me." Now, that is just what might be said of many things, regarding which the question might be asked, "What harm will they do?"-if they do not burn, they will at least blacken. They cannot be touched without leaving their mark. The coming in contact with them, even for once, may leave a stain on the imagination, the memory, the conscience, the heart, which it may be impossible ever to wipe out. The first step, in such a case, however slight it may appear, is an awfully perilous one, for when it is taken, it paves the way for, and makes comparatively easy, a second and worse. It is well to remember that, ordinarily, in such a course, one does not step all at once into what is unmistakably wicked. The temptation and the inclination is, to begin with something that is-to say the worst of itonly doubtful in its character, and might even have something said in its defence. The battle is generally fought, and lost or won, there; and one of the helps to a right decision, and to conquest, is the testing of the doubtful thing by the question, "What would Jesus do?" If that test were but faithfully applied, how many a young heart would be disentangled from those silken cords which otherwise may soon become like cart ropes and iron chains!

I would especially plead most earnestly with boys, who, through bad companionships or otherwise, are thus in danger. Dear boys, your whole future may hang on your saying Yes or No, in such a case. Don't think it a trifling matter. It may give its colour to your whole life. It may give your character its stamp. It may determine what sort of men you are to be,-ay, what your life, and death, and eternity, are to be! I would re-echo to you the words of the great Apostle, "Flee youthful lusts:"—"Keep thyself pure:"—"Walk as children of light . . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." I would have you to think often of that word of the great Master Himself, and to turn the beatitude into a prayer, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." I would fain help you to stand, where others have fallen; and I know nothing more likely than the question, "What would Jesus do?" to make sure of the song of deliverance being sung,-"Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped!"

IV. COURAGE.—" He steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem" (Luke ix. 51). No young person, and especially no boy, likes to be thought a coward. As a rule, boys have an unbounded admiration for courage, and contempt for cowardice. Many a one would rather be called even a thief, or a liar, or stupid, than a coward. I am not at all sure that there is a right understanding as to what courage and cowardice really are. For instance, when preparing this address, I saw several small boys running along the narrow ridge of a high house, strangers to fear. Many would call that "plucky" or "brave." I once looked into a deep, dark pool, in one of our Scottish rivers, the very sight of which brought a strange eerie feeling over one, especially when told that a man had fallen, or thrown himself into it, some time before, and that his dead body had been dragged out of it. And yet I heard that a youth, knowing this, when other people were almost afraid to pass the spot, threw his penknife into the pool, and then dived down to the bottom and brought it up. That seems a brave thing to do. It requires, however, much more real courage for a boy to go down on his knees to pray, before other boys, and to persist in doing what is right, when everybody around him is doing, and trying to get him to'do, what is wrong. He is the truly brave boy who can do that; and there is not one in a thousand who can do it.

A boy who, in such a case, can differ from all his fellows,—who refuses to do what is wrong, and says, "I dare not do it,"—well deserves to be called "brave."

Are you not sometimes afraid or ashamed to do the right, and especially to stand alone, to differ from companions and friends, in doing what God and conscience bid you? Are you not tempted to give way before the laugh, the sneer, the ridicule? And what, at such a time, will help you? Oh think, "What would JESUS do?" See how He stood alone,-how He "endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself," -how, at the call of duty, and because it was God's will, and because a world's salvation was at stake, He did not shrink back from Gethsemane, with its agony and sweat of blood, nor from Calvary, with its cross and awful accompaniments. Others would have persuaded Him not to go up to Jerusalem. And yet, when on the way, He seems to have been in haste to get forward, and literally ran before the disciples, so eager was He to accomplish His great work. How true it was of Him, "I set my face like a flint: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." With mockery and shame and pain and death before Him, He "steadfastly set His face" to go forward. Would to God that we had this kind of courage,—that we were brave as Jesus was!

V. Temper.—"I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. x. 1). This may not be much thought of by some, and yet it is of the last

importance. There is scarcely anything upon which our comfort and happiness and usefulness so much depend. You must have noticed how much is said about this in the Word of God,—what a place it has, in the teaching of Christ Himself,—how, in epistle after epistle, and in chapter after chapter, it is taken up,—how, indeed, next to salvation, it might almost be said to stand second in importance. I met, long since, with a tract bearing the title, "Temper is Everything."* It gave an account of a number of visits paid to different homes where bad temper was yielded to, and at the close of the day it was felt that it was not too much to say that "temper was everything."

There are various kinds of tempers. There is a passionate temper, when a boy flies up in a moment, on the slightest provocation. He is just like gunpowder,—the moment a spark falls on it, it explodes. There is an irritable temper. Some people are easily fretted, and put out of humour, whenever they are opposed or thwarted, or when things do not go as they would like,—losing patience, and saying and doing foolish things, which make their best friends ashamed of them, or, at least, grieved and humbled on their account. The temper of such people reminds one of a coarse bandage when it rubs on a raw sore. Some have a sulky, obstinate, "dour" temper. There is no getting them to move from their purpose. Others have a sensitive temper. These are always thinking themselves slighted, they do not get sufficient

^{*} London Religious Tract Society.

respect and deference paid to them, and, taking up notions of this kind, they nurse them, till they come to be in a little world of their own, which there is no getting them out of; they insist on people apologising. &c.; they are always as if on the watch for causes of offence; so that their friends never know what turn things are to take. This is a very troublesome kind of temper, and is often found even in good people. Some have what I might call a malicious temper,setting everybody by the ears, telling one what another has said of him, separating chief friends, and instead of soothing and trying to put the best meaning on a thing, always putting the worst construction on what is said or done, as if actuated by a simple love of mischief. And lastly, some have a revengeful, or unforgiving temper, never forgetting an injury, and never feeling kindly towards one who has at any time said or done anything against them,-running in the face of the Lord's express teaching: "Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times sevien."

I need hardly say how utterly un-Christian and un-Christlike all these tempers are,—what pain they inflict on others,—how they grieve the Holy Spirit,—how they do dishonour to Christ. What cause we have to blush and mourn over our sins of temper, and the harm they have done! Oh these sharp and cutting

words, and fierce, angry looks, and jealous, revengeful, unforgiving feelings,—how can we conceive anything at all like them in the case of the Lord Jesus? Perhaps you say,—"Shall we not give as good as we get? Shall we suffer ourselves to be slighted and trampled on? Shall we tamely submit to be wronged and insulted? Can we forget what others have said of us, or done to us?" "What would Jesus do?" "Who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not."

VI. Humility.—"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. xi. 29). Oh the pride even of children!—pride of birth, of wealth and position, of high connections, of education, of dress, of looks, of abilities,—so independent, so high-minded, so impatient of advice or control, so conceited, so vain—above doing common household work, or humble duties otherwise! It might often make us blush, if some one were to whisper in our ear, "What would Jesus do?"

It is strange what people can be proud of. Have you never seen a boy who evidently thought himself somebody, with his new jacket, or smart-looking football or cricket-dress, or cane, or cigar, or—shall I venture to say—with a pipe in his teeth? A friend told me, one day, in answer to my inquiries as to how a boy was getting on, in whom I took an interest, that at present he was "worshipping his neck-tie!" Have you never seen a girl carrying her head ever so high,

because she had got a fashionable bonnet, or a bright-coloured parasol, or a gold watch which needed to be very often consulted, so that she might be kept well-informed as to how the time was passing? The thing itself might be the merest trifle, but like a feather, it shewed how the wind was blowing, and the little peacock strutted about as if all the eyes in the world were fixed on the one wonderful object!

Have you never known young people who were ashamed of humble but honest and honourable labour? There are sons of well-to-do tradesmen who would not, for anything, be seen on the street carrying a parcel, lest they should be called "cads," by other youths as foolish as themselves, at some better-class school; and others who would almost die of fancied disgrace, at the thought of going a-shopping, basket in hand, for an industrious and struggling widowed mother. And there are girls who, when they are asked what they are going to do, say they are going to be "ladies;" who, rather than work honourably, would live in genteel poverty; who, when at length they must go out into the world to earn a livelihood, make all sorts of apologies for what needs less to be apologised for than anything they ever did, speaking of wishing a little "pocket-money" or "pin-money," as they choose to call it, instead of boldly coming out and saying, "I am the woman that works for the bread."

There are many noble exceptions to all this, where sons and daughters have risen above the prejudices of their class, have run in the face of all their early wishes

and hopes, have turned their education to good account, have done the work assigned to them by God, and thus have lived to some good purpose. Many have done this, that they might contribute to the comfort or maintenance of parents who had done much for them, and needed their help, or that they might aid in bringing up the younger members of the family. There are those who have taken up the hammer, or the pen, or the pencil, or the needle, who have gone out as teachers, or governesses, or nurses, -who have taken their place at the desk or behind the counter, from such high motives as I have indicated; and while a few have mistakenly looked down upon them or dropped their acquaintance, God has approved and smiled on them, and blessed them. Even this has the closest connection with what I may call the "text" of this address. Did they not say of Jesus, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" "Is not this the carpenter? And they were offended at Him." All such honest workers as I have described, may quote the example of their Lord Himself, and triumphantly vindicate themselves with the question, "What would JESUS do?" "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "I am among you as he that serveth." Think of Him washing the disciples' feet! That beautiful and wonderful sight bears alike upon common and Christian work. Read the whole passage in the thirteenth chapter of John's gospel, and notice especially these verses:

"Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went

to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded. . . . So, after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Let me call your special attention to this beautiful picture, as giving point and power to the question, "What would JESUS do?"

VII. OBEDIENCE.—"He was subject unto them" [His parents]. (Luke ii. 51.) I shall not say much on this head, as it will form the subject of a separate address. A few words here will suffice. Whatever others may venture to do, there can be no doubt as to the duty of Christian children in this matter. And yet I fear that even Christian sons and daughters come far short of their Pattern, in this as in other things.

Do you ever so far forget yourselves as to say "No" to any command from your father or mother? There is only one thing that can be worse, and that is—saying "No" to God. Whenever you are tempted to be

disobedient—to be wanting in respect or love to a parent—remember your motto, "What would Jesus do?" Even as He hung upon the cross, suffering, dying, one of His last thoughts and words was about His mother, commending her to the beloved disciple, and saying to him, "Behold thy mother!"

VIII. Self-Denial. — "Even Christ pleased not Himself" (Rom. xv. 3). Do you ever say "No" to yourselves? Are you tempted to be selfish—to take your own way—to keep all that you have to yourselves—to take advantage of others, and please or profit yourselves at their expense? Are you tempted to spend your money on yourselves, instead of sharing it with others, giving to the poor, or helping on the cause of God at home or abroad? What shall you do with what God has given you? Let this decide, "What would Jesus do?"

I may have an opportunity of taking up this important subject more fully at some future time. Meanwhile, let me say that there are few things which some people seem to think less about. One is sometimes almost tempted to ask, "Do you know that there is such a word,—such a thing, as self-denial? Did you ever deny yourself, all your days? Does it ever occur to you that you ought to deny yourself?"

It is a great matter to acquire the habit of self-denial, —of saying "No" to ourselves, in early life. It meets us at the very beginning of our Christian discipleship.

"Then Jesus said unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." The fewer wants we have, the better. The less we are dependent on anything of an outward kind, the better. We can accustom ourselves wonderfully to do without things which, once, we thought we could scarcely live without. The habit of self-denial is formed like other habits—by practice, by repeating again and again and again the act of self-denial, and the mastery over ourselves in this way is worthy of an effort.

Those who profess to be the disciples of Christ often appear very unamiable to others, from the want of this grace. What should we think of a Christian boy or girl, getting in a nice cake or other delicacy from a country home, burying it in the depths of a locked trunk or drawer, and every now and then retiring and devouring it, all alone? What should we think of a Christian boy or girl who was always bent on getting the first and best of everything, regardless of the comfort and enjoyment of others,—the seat nearest the fire, the corner of the sofa, the tit-bits at table, the best place in the railway carriage, the warmest wrapper in winter, the coolest and most shady place in summer,-thinking always and only of self? What sort of Christianity would the world take that to be? And yet it is to be found, more or less, among those who call themselves Christians.

Let us seek to cherish and to manifest a large, generous, liberal spirit, sharing what we have with

others, giving up our own will and way to others, having regard to others' comfort and happiness as well as our own, remembering the parable of the good Samaritan, and the question, "Who is my neighbour?" and seeking always to be ready to act the part of a good neighbour and brother. "Look not every one on his own things, but every one also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We may well make it our daily prayer that this spirit may be ours, and that we may be delivered from selfishness, which lies at the root of, and is the very essence of all other sins. As "love is the fulfilling of the law," selfishness is the breaking of it. And the prevalence of this sin among children makes us anxious to do what we can in helping to lay an arrest upon it. There was no shadow of selfishness in the Master; and for Christians at least, it would be a help if, in little things as in great, He were made our example, and the question were ever coming up, "What would IESUS do?"

It may seem as if, in giving these specimens of what Christians should be, we were setting up far too high a standard,—a standard, indeed, which none of us can hope ever to reach. Of course, the standard is high; for it is no less than perfection,—and yet nothing lower will suffice. It is the rule which God Himself has given us, by which our whole conduct is to be regulated. The rule is capable of the widest application,—indeed, there is nothing to which it does not apply; and just in proportion as we strive after, and, by the grace of God,

attain to it, shall ours be at all happy, holy, useful, Christian lives.

In view of all that has been said, I can give you no better counsel for the future than to study the Word, and especially the Life and Teaching of the Lord Jesus as set forth in the Gospels; seeking the enlightenment and guidance and grace of the Holy Spirit, and then applying your knowledge of Christ in such ways as we have indicated, having your whole life and conduct regulated by this—

"WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?"*

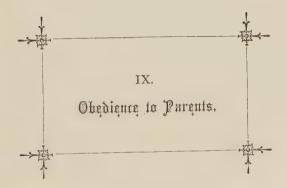
- "Lord, as to Thy dear cross we flee,
 And pray to be forgiven,
 So let Thy life our pattern be,
 And form our souls for heaven.
- "Help us, through good report and ill, Our daily cross to bear; Like Thee, to do our Father's will, Our brother's griefs to share.
- "Let grace our selfishness expel,
 Our earthliness refine;
 And kindness in our bosoms dwell,
 As free and true as Thine."

Pranter.

BLESSED God and Father, help us now to come to Thee, reverently and yet trustfully. How shall we praise

^{*} See tract entitled, "The Text on the Wall."

Thee enough for all Thy wondrous love and kindness! We thank Thee for Christ our Redeemer, Christ our Sacrifice, Christ our Righteousness, Christ our Friend. But we thank Thee also for Christ our Example, Christ our Pattern, Christ our Guide. We thank Thee for His perfect life, as the standard and rule of ours. We mourn because we come so unspeakably short of what He was, -because we are, in everything, so unlike Him, and by our unlikeness to Him have so often made Him to be evil spoken of. Oh that we might be more like Jesus in heart and in life. Oh that we might be like Him,—be willing to be like Him,-in His diligence, and truthfulness, and purity, and courage, and temper, and humility, and obedience, and self-denial. Aid us in the study of His life, and character, and teaching, as set forth in the Word. May the Holy Spirit open up to us more fully the character of Jesus. May His life be more the great rule of ours. Let us not go where He would not have gone. Let us do nothing that He would not have done. Let us not read or look at or say anything that He would not have read or looked at or said. Make us willing to try everything by this,-"What would Jesus do?" Help us to make this our rule and guide in everything,-"What would Fesus do?" Let none of us be afraid to ask the question, and honestly to answer it. Help all Christians to be more like Him whose name they bear. Draw others to Him, that being saved by Him, they may be made like Him. Give us the good hope that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. We ask this in the name of our Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One. Amen.





- 2 Jesus Christ my Lord fulfilled it, In His home at Nazareth,— So His heavenly Father willed it— While a child He dwelt beneath,
- 3 Help me, Lord, in this sweet duty Guide me in Thy steps divine; Show me all the joy and beauty Of obedience such as Thine.
- 4 Teach me how to please and gladden
 Those who toil and care for me;
 Many a grief their heart must sadden,
 Let me still their comfort be!
- 5 Then, when years are gath'ring o'er them, When they're sleeping in the grave— Sweet will seem the love I bore them, Right the rev'rence which I gave.
- 6 All my wilful ways confessing,
 Now I'd keep this first command—
 Seek to win the appointed blessing—
 Life within the promised land.



HAVE a matter of great importance to bring before you to-day. If I can persuade you that it is of as much importance as I think it,

ay, as *God* thinks it, I shall not have prepared this address to you in vain. I know well that there is great need to direct special attention to the subject to which I refer, and before I have done, I trust that not only some young people, but some who are no longer young, will see their sin, and confess it, and forsake it; as far as it is possible, making amends for the past, and humbly resolving to do better for the future.

Let me suppose one of you boys to be about to enter an office or warehouse, as a young clerk or apprentice, to learn your business, or one of you girls to be about to leave home for the first time, to enter on an important situation. In the one case your master, or in the other, your mother, gives you two little cards containing instructions for your guidance in the discharge of your duties, written or printed in large characters, so that you may easily read them, short enough to be committed to memory, and so important that you would need to have them always, as we say, "at your finger ends,"-calling them to mind and acting on them at all times of the day, the neglect of any of them being sure to lead to the saddest consequences. Let me suppose these instructions to be arranged in the order of their importance,-Card No. 1 demanding your attention first and chiefly, but being quite incomplete without Card No. 2. Besides the most important coming first, there are also marks, calling special attention to some of them, with a note here and there added, telling how happy those will be who attend to them. Would it not be very strange and very wrong if you put these cards in your pocket, or locked them up in your trunk, and never thought any more about them? or if you learned them all off by heart, so that you could repeat them any day, and yet very much disregarded them, and paid no attention even to those that were marked as specially important, picking out a few of the rules for yourself, and acting as if the others did not exist at all? Surely such a course would not be pleasing to your master or your mother, and you would soon get yourself into difficulty and disgrace.

Can you think of anything like this that has actually taken place, not as between you and men, but as between you and God? God has been pleased to give you two such Cards of Instructions as I have been describing, written at first on two stone tablets with

His own finger; and I suppose every one of you has got a copy, exactly taken from these, either in his pocket or in his mind, or both. You can tell me what these are. The first card contains four directions regarding our duty to God, -these the most important. The second contains other six, regarding our duty to man. The rule at the head of the list, in each case, demands our special attention, and cannot be neglected without your suffering sorely by it. Just look at these two. The first tells us that we are to take the Lord as our God, and to have no other gods before Him. It has a special mark at it -a hand with a finger pointing to it, thus—(3, -as if it said, "Look here: see that you don't neglect this!" And yet how many of you have lived as if it were not there at all! You say, you don't bow down to an image; you never swear; you remember the Sabbath-day. But what do you say to this,-having no God but Jehovah-the God of heaven? The Lord Jesus came to make God known to us,-to shew us the way to Him,—to be the way to Him; for He says, "I am the Way;" and He has given us His Holy Spirit to teach us to understand about this way. And yet many of us have not come,—will not come. We will not have God's way of knowing Him and coming to Him, -that is, hy Jesus; and we cannot have God as our God, in any other way. This is the first and greatest commandment of all,-that, by believing on Jesus Christ-by coming to Him-by giving up our hearts to Him-by accepting Him as our Saviour and

Lord, we take God to be our God. This is the beginning of all true religion. This is the first step on the way to heaven. This is the first thing we can do, that is pleasing to God; and until it be done, God is angry with us every day. I must earnestly press this upon you. I would not like to give you an address on any subject without seeking to bring this forward, and if you pass it by, I have not much hope of your attending to anything else that I can say. I would like you to hear the loving voice of God as it comes down from heaven to you through His dear Son, saying, "Take Me as your God!" Many are listening to this heavenly voice, and taking God at His word: why should not you? That is the high road to happiness. In any other road, you may seek long enough for it, but you will never find it. That is one of the reasons why it stands first on the list, and seeks to catch your eye at once.

Now for the corresponding direction on the other card, coming before all the rest, and having also a very special mark at it. I daresay some of you could repeat it to me without requiring to read it. What is the first and highest of the duties which we owe to man? We shall take the New Testament version of it, lest any one should say—though without any reason—that the other was only in the Old Testament, and was merely for the Jews. Read Ephes. vi. 1-3:

[&]quot;Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

"Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

"That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

And take as the text, Ephesians vi. 2:-

"The First Commandment with Promise."

Perhaps some of you have not thought this a very important matter, and you may be questioning whether I am not making too much of it, and giving it too high a place. I am quite sure I am not; for I am merely giving it the place which God has given it, and He is a better judge than either you or I. Next to God, our parents have the highest place, and the same words that are applied to the serving of God are used to denote the doing of our duty to our parents. One of these is that beautiful word, PIETY. Take as the two heads of this address,—I. An urgent Command. II. A precious Promise.

- I. AN URGENT COMMAND.—Do your duty to your father and mother. This may be taken to include those who occupy the place of a parent,—a grandfather or grandmother, or uncle or aunt, or friend or guardian. I shall try to bring out the spirit of this command in a few short remarks.
- 1. Honour your parents. That was the word used, when the command was first given, and we have it

repeated in our passage. It means to treat them with all respect and reverence. If you saw a boy, who had got a holiday, and intended to set out on a pleasuretrip to the country, promising himself much enjoyment, and if the day turned out wet and stormy, so that he could not go, or got himself drenched with rain,-what would you think of him if he were to lose his temper, and be angry with God, and speak disrespectfully of Him, and say He was not kind, perhaps even swearing at Him, and defying Him to His face? If you saw a girl, who wished to be better off in the world, and asked God to make her rich, so that she could get many things which she would like very much to have, -what would you think of her, if, when she had just to go on as a little servant, and work hard for her bread, and be meanly clad as before, she were to find fault with God, and scold Him, and shake her head at Him, and say, 'I wish there was no God, for He does not give me what I want," and were then to take pleasure in doing what she knew would displease God? I think I see you lifting up your hands in amazement, saying, "Did you ever see or hear of anything like that? What awful wickedness! It would be a wonder if God did not strike such a one dead on the spot!" I can fancy I see you running as far away as possible from such, lest some judgment should come down on them, as the people of Israel fled, when the earth opened, and Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed up alive.

And yet, is there nothing among ourselves that comes

near to this? Is there not something very like it? May not those be said to be just next door to this, who do not honour their parents? For, just as we are commanded to fear God, so He commands us to fear and honour our parents. "Ye shall fear every one his mother and his father, and keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. xix. 3). This does not mean that we are to be afraid of them, but that we are to pay all respect and reverence to them. Our parents most resemble God in the place they occupy, in their authority over us, in their love toward us; and dishonour done to them is next to dishonour done to God.

Our words to our parents should be respectful: we should honour them in our speaking. I am amazed and grieved to hear how some children speak to their fathers and mothers,—to hear the pert, disrespectful, impudent answers they sometimes give them. We should be careful how we speak of them,-what names we give them. If I were speaking to young men, I should have something to say to them about this. And then, when we are speaking to them, it is not only what we say, but the tone of voice in which we say it, that should be attended to. I have sometimes heard words-not bad in themselves-spoken in such a tone, that they went like an arrow to a mother's heart; and long after, the tone would ring in one's ears, so that it could hardly be borne. I have even heard young people, when charged with having done something wrong, say rudely to a father or mother, "It's a lie!" and never seem to think

they had done anything very far wrong. And yet, even if they spoke truly, such words as these should never have crossed their lips. Ill-natured, impudent words to a parent, are very displeasing to God. I am sure many boys and girls, alike among the rich and poor, need to be warned as to this. Dear children, even if your parents are very wicked, even if they are drunken, and do not respect themselves, let it always be a rule with you to speak to them with all respect. Need I say that there is sometimes a sulky silence, which is just as bad as anything that can be spoken?

Our looks and gestures should be respectful. Do you see that little fellow, who has been found fault with, or has not got what he wanted? What a face he puts on, —what ill-nature shews itself in these pouting lips, what revenge and defiance there is in that fiery eye, what a scowl on his young face! But he does not say anything; perhaps he does not dare. If he durst, to a certainty he would. He does all he dares to do, -all he can do; and as he shakes that little head of his, I can hardly venture to guess what he is thinking and feeling. Oh these angry looks and gestures, how common they are, and yet how wicked! Would you like to know what God thinks of them? He says, "The eye" —notice that—"the eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." I wish you would remember that your eye and lips may sin, as well as your tongue and hand. Especially when

you have been punished for doing wrong, keep this in mind.

Our actions—our general conduct and behaviour towards them, should be respectful. We may do things, that are right in themselves, in a very disrespectful way,ungraciously, - offensively. Where there is some infirmity,—where, for instance, a parent is deaf, or lame, or sick, or ill-behaved, this is very apt to be. We do what is asked or wished, but we do it with a very bad grace. The same may be said of the way in which we receive and treat their instructions,—it may be carelessly, heartlessly, - paying little or no attention; so that we hear almost as if they were not speaking to us at all. There is something far wrong in this. Then there is such a thing as being ashamed of our parents,—when they are poor, when they are not so well educated as we are, when they cannot speak so well, or read so well, or write so well, or dress so well, as we do, or when they live in a humble dwelling. We would not like it to be known that they are friends of ours. We disoren them. Those who are truly great, never do this. It was not so with Joseph, one of the first princes of Egypt, when he presented his old shepherdfather to the king, and was as proud of him as if he had been a king too. It was a noble sight. I think I see him paying the old man every mark of respect, saying, without shame, "My father!" as he ushered him into Pharaoh's presence. So we are told of one who afterwards became an Archbishop, that when his father, a

plain countryman, went to visit him in London, inquiring "if John Tillotson was at home," as the man-servant drove him from the door, the son, who heard his voice, hurried out, said before the servants, "It is my beloved father," and went down on his knees to get his blessing! To their dying day, children, regard and treat your parents with all respect. You will never have cause to regret it. Honour your father and mother. I close this part of my subject with one more text of Scripture: "Cursed be he that SETTETH LIGHT BY his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen."

2. OBEY your parents. It is not enough to pay them respect, in a general way: they must be obeyed. If you were to hear God's voice speaking to you right down from heaven, as people used to hear it long ago, would you dare to say No? Would you refuse to obey it? I am sometimes startled and grieved to hear the word "No" spoken by a child to a parent. Perhaps some one says, "And what of it?" Why, to say "No" to a parent,—to refuse to obey a parent. is all one as if it were done to God! It is God who gives parents authority to command their children. It is He who gives them the right to require of us what they do require, so that He is concerned in our disobedience or obedience. To say "No" to a parent, is to run directly in the face of God's law. And we may not choose what commands we shall obey, and what we shall not. The Lord shuts us up to entire obedience; "Children, obey your parents in all things, in the Lord,

for this is right." There is, indeed, the limit-"in the Lord." If they require us to do sinful things, then we must not-we dare not; we must obey God rather than them. But if the things they bid us do, are not sinful, then we must do whatever they ask. Our grand example, here, is the Lord Jesus Himself. It is expressly said, "He went down, and was subject unto His parents." Though He was far wiser and far holier than they, and though they were poor people, He was a most obedient son. And not only was it so, when He was a mere child-and I should like you to notice this -but when He was a lad, ay, even when He came to to be a man, He still seems to have been "subject" to His parents. He never said "No," when He was asked to do a thing. When any of you are tempted to be disobedient, remember, -"Jesus would not have done this!"

I shall take it for granted, meanwhile, that you do not altogether refuse to do what you are bidden. I trust I address no one who would give a blunt "No" to a father's or mother's command. And so I shall pass on to say something about the *kind* of obedience that should be rendered.

(1.) Our obedience should be without questioning. Some children have a very bad trick of asking a reason for everything. It is not that they really wish to get information, but that they don't wish to do the thing. "Johnnie, will you leave the room for five minutes?" "Why, mamma?" "Mary, I wish you to have your

room made tidy to-day." "Why to-day?" There should be no such questioning. We do not need reasons for doing what we are bidden. We should learn to do things simply because we are asked. Our questioning, when it is meant to put off time, or to get away from the doing of a thing, is very wrong and sinful.

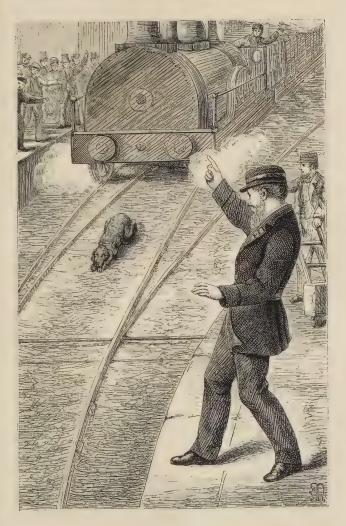
(2.) Our obedience should be prompt. The thing asked should be done at once. Much depends on this. A parent should never require to repeat his command. To wait for a second bidding is just next to refusing. A mother calls in her boy from play; or she wishes to send him on some errand: or it is time for lessons or for bed. "Just coming," is the answer; or "Immediately;" or "I'll be there in a moment." But he has to finish his game first, and then he must have some talk after it, so that I have seen it ten minutes ere the command was obeyed. Sometimes I have seen the boy's mother kept standing at the door all the time. Or a daughter is asked to lay aside her story-book, and prepare her lessons, or do some necessary work. She is loath to do it. "Just another page;" or, "I'll just finish this chapter;" or, "I'm almost through, and would like to finish it." No; shut the book at once, and lay it aside. There is a saying, "What is done soon, is twice done." Many parents have to complain of the want of attention to this. I might mention several things in which it appears. The leaving of play, - the learning of lessons. -going to bed,-still more, getting out of bed. The rising in the morning is, with many, a serious affair. What hard work many a poor mother has, to get her children ready for school in the morning. Though feeble herself, she rises to call her boy; but he wants to lie a little longer, covers over his head with the bed-clothes, and is soon again fast asleep. I wish our children, in the matter of prompt obedience, were like some masons of whom a friend, who happened to be passing at the dinner-hour, told me this,—that, when the clock struck, some who had the mallet in their hand, ready to come down with it, did not strike the blow, but threw the mallet aside and hurried off to dinner or to rest. Children should never think twice about a command, but be up and off at once.

We might often learn important lessons from the lower animals, and not least from dogs, which, when well-trained, are remarkable for their obedience. Let me tell you a story which brings out strikingly the advantage of prompt obedience. There was a dog that was growing old and deaf, belonging to one of the officials at a railway station. One day the dog was coming leisurely along between the two lines of rail, when the express train appeared, and screeching out its shrill whistle, came dashing on, as you have seen "the express" do. The poor dog could hear no sound, the train was close behind, there was no way of giving him warning in time to get off the line, and there seemed nothing for it but that the poor brute should be killed on the spot. His master, however, by a well-

known sign with his finger, ordered the dog to lie down; in a moment he lay flat on the ground; and in less time than I have taken to tell the story, the train had passed over him, and left him unharmed. His prompt obedience saved his life.

(3.) Our obedience should be *cheerful*. It should be "not of constraint, but willingly." *Compulsory* obedience is not right obedience. We should not obey sulkily,—making it plain that we only do the thing because we *must*. Half of the pleasure of getting a thing done, lies in its being done cheerfully. However painful and disagreeable the duty required of us may be, we should try to wear a pleasant look, and so greatly enhance the service done. There is a *right* and a *wrong* way of *obeying*: see that yours be the right way,—unquestioning,—prompt,—cheerful.

Long ago, the disobedient were the objects of God's special displeasure. He classes them with the very worst of characters,—blasphemers and the like (2 Tim. iii. 2); and in Old Testament times, in order to mark the enormity of their sin, and His abhorrence of it, God commanded that it should have the same punishment as murder. "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastised him, will not hearken unto them . . All the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put away evil from among you; and all Israel shall hear and fear" (Deuteronomy xxi. 18, 21).



PROMPT OBEDIENCE.



3. Love your parents. It is not enough to pay them outward respect,—to make a point of obeying them: you must love them. They love you, and nothing will satisfy them but your love in return. Nothing will make up to them for the want of your love. I wonder at the way in which some children speak of their parents. Here is a lad of fourteen, who brings his 3s. 6d.—or whatever his wage may be—home on the Saturday night, and thinks he has done all that is required of him; and when he stays out at night, or takes up with bad companions, and is reproved for it, he tells his mother that she gets every penny of his wage, and surely she may be content with that! No, my boy; it is not your wage, but your heart—your love, that your mother values, and that she has a right to. A poor woman once came to me, almost broken-hearted, and told me this story: -She had been calling on her daughter, a young servant girl, in a good situation. When the daughter opened the door and saw who was there, she threw a shilling to her, as if she had been a beggar, said she was afraid lest her mistress should come, and shut the door in her mother's face, leaving her staggering under the rebuff. I think I see that mother yet, as she said to me, "What was my daughter's money to me, when I had lost her love?" Oh it is sad to think of a parent's love to a child, and the little love there often is in return ;-to think how the mother has doted on her little son ever since he was an infant-how she loved him, -how proud she

was of him,—what joy she had in him,—and that, after all, it should come to this!

It is a festival day. There is a great procession of Sabbath-school children, all dressed in their best, moving along amid crowds on either side. Look at that little woman, bustling about, quite in an excitement, now peeping through the crowd, and now standing on tip-toe, trying to see over their heads. Who can she be? What can be the matter with her? I have found it out now. She is the mother of one of the boys, and when she sees her son, unable to restrain her joy and pride any longer, she calls out to one standing by, though a perfect stranger to her, in a perfect ecstasy of delight, "That's my son, Sir, in the blue jacket!" Now is it not sad to think of that loving mother living to see the day when "the boy with the blue jacket" shall no longer care for her, and shall think he does an act of wonderful generosity if he pays her rent and gives her a shilling or two in the week, scarcely enough to keep body and soul together? Is it not dreadful to think of her having one day to say, "Would to God I had never been a mother!" I can fancy nothing more heart-breaking than for a mother, who, when her little ones came in from school, said to a neighbour who had been shewing her jewels to her-"these are my jewels!" -to lose these children's affection and be uncared for by them. Dear children, love your fathers and mothers. They desire your love. They deserve your love. It is worth all the world besides to them. Do not rob them of what they are so justly entitled to expect.

4. BE KIND to your parents. If you really love them, you will be kind to them. When you are at home with them, how many little acts of attention you can shew them,-how many little services you can render,-not only doing what they ask, but what you know or think they would like. Anticipate their wishes, and give them a pleasant surprise. And when you are away from home, write often, and regularly, and kindly to them: let there be many little loving messages, av. and where it can be, many little loving gifts. It is a fine thing to see that printer's boy working hard, at extra hours, eager to have a half-sovereign, -not to put in the savings' bank, or to get something to himself,-but to give it to his mother. Never is he more a man, than when he is proud and thankful to see her wearing the dress, or enjoying the other little comforts, which his money purchased. How pleasing it is to see that servant girl, who, at the close of her first half-year's service, hurries home with her wage in her pocket, to help to pay the doctor's bill or her sick father's rent.

I might mention many beautiful instances of kindness to parents. I have heard of an American Indian chief who was taken prisoner with his son, and, with heavy chains on his limbs, was cast into prison. The chief whose prisoner he is, has no child, and wishes to adopt the boy as his son. He brings out rich ornaments for the wrists and ankles, such as the Indians delight to wear, and tells him to choose whatever he likes. One by one the boy takes them up and looks at them; but his thoughts go

back to his father in his dungeon, and for him he gives up all. "As you give me my choice," his reply is, "I had rather wear such as my father wears,"-a chain! See that youth, respectable and well educated, who has been unable to get money otherwise, and now offers to enlist as a soldier, provided he gets a good bounty. What does the lad mean? His old father is in prison for debt; the son would do anything to get him released; he gets the bounty asked, and though it may cost him many a year of hardship and danger, he hurries to the well-known cell, takes his father in his arms, and tells him he is free! Or look into this humble home. On a bed lies a sick man, so helpless that his wife can do little else than wait upon him. She cannot go out to wash or work. People wonder how they live, for they get no parish aid. Do you see that little girl of twelve? How nimbly her fingers are going! Every morning she is up at four: it is nothing but stitch, stitch, stitch with her, all the day. She is the little bread-winner for the household. A boy has taken a liking for the sea, as many boys do. He has got his heart's wish, and as a little midshipman, is about to leave his home. His trunk is already packed, and carried to the boat which is waiting to take him off. He sees the struggle in his mother's heart. He would fain go to sea; but he knows there is something more important than his liking,—his mother's happiness; and I hear him say, "Go and tell them to bring my trunk back; I will not go away to break my mother's heart!"

Why should there be so little of all this? I saw two sisters lately. The one was taken ill, and the other nursed her most assiduously, night and day watching tenderly over her, giving her her food and medicine, doing everything for her. The invalid recovered, and now the strong one is invalid, and the recovered one is nurse, watching in turn, doing for her sister all that her sister did for her,—a sight beautiful to see. I rejoiced to see two young sisters thus repaying each other's love and care. "Well," you say, "that is but fair play. Things are just as they should be. would have been strange if it had been otherwise." So say I, in regard to parents and children. "Time about is fair play." Just think what these parents have had to do for you, and how willingly and ungrudgingly they did it :--your father working hard to support you, and sharing all he had with you; your mother watching over you, nursing you, bearing with you, spending many a sleepless night, when you were ill and nobody else would come near you, still waiting on, risking her own life to save yours. But for what she was to you, and did for you, you had died long ago, or perhaps had been a cripple,—a helpless object. Many a long year she had of it, and it is her turn now,—when she is sick or infirm, or old and unable to work. It is your duty now, in some small measure, to repay her kindness. Your parents supported you when you could not support yourself, and it is no great matter if you do the same for them now, not allowing them to be maintained by

charity or by the parish, but giving them the best place in your home, and regarding whatever belongs to you as belonging to them. It is a *debt*, a *just debt*. Hence God's Word says, "Let the children learn to shew piety at home, and *to* REQUITE *their own parents*."

It is very unbecoming in those who profess to be godly, even if their parents are not what they ought to be, not to shew them all the kindness they can. The ungodly world cries "Shame!" I heard of such a case lately. A dying parent lay in a poor, ill-furnished room, partly sustained by charity. The young people had everything comfortable and nice. When the case was mentioned to a man who had no fear of God, the contrast between the comfort of the son and the destitution of the parent seemed so outrageous, that he was indignant, and growled out, "Oh, the brute!" The expression is not one I would like you to use, but it shews what the very world thinks of such conduct. The Spaniards have a proverb, "One father can support ten sons, but ten sons cannot support one father." Sons and daughters, I charge you before God, that you never be unkind to your parents. In health or in sickness, in plenty or in poverty, living or dying, shew them all the kindness that you would wish to be shewn to yourselves, when you come to be what they now are.

5. VALUE your parents. Well you may. You will never find the like of them again. You will not have them long. Prize them while you have them. Let no companion come between you and them. Let nobody

set you up against them. Let nothing induce you to think lightly of them. Be like those two sons, in a besieged city, when it is taken by the enemy, and is about to be set fire to. The commander of the enemy's forces is in some way under obligation to them. He gives them liberty to go and bring out whatever property they value most, and are able to carry; and see, yonder they are, carrying—what? Not gold, or other "valuables," as people call them, but the one his father and the other his mother,—as prizing these above all else.

They will soon be away from you. Oh, do not lay up bitter thoughts for the future, by failing to prize your parents now. I find one great man saying, "What would I give to call my mother back to earth for one day, to ask her pardon, on my knees, for all those acts by which I gave her gentle spirit pain!" When the grave has closed over our beloved ones, how bitterly will our past unkindnesses come to mind, and how thankful should we be then for one day such as we have now!

And here let me put in a word for aged parents. When a father or mother grows old, the duty to support and shew kindness to and bear with them, becomes increasingly binding. There is a great want of reverence for old age in our time; and yet what solemn charges God gives in connection with it. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord" (Lev. xix. 32). Nothing can be more contrary to the whole

teaching of God's Word than such conduct as leads aged parents to feel that they are a burden, that they are "in the way," and that the sooner they are away the better. "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Prov. xxiii. 22).

II. A PRECIOUS PROMISE.—"That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." I can but touch on this.

I. God says, Obedience will be pleasing to Him. It is implied in the promise, that God will approve it. And is it not reward enough to please God, to have the approval of God? There is scarcely anything in all the Bible of which He speaks so approvingly as of the dutifulness of the sons of Rechab to their father. You will find an account of this in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah, the whole of which I would like you to read. The chapter closes with these words:—

"And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever."

2. God says, It will be a blessing to yourself. "It shall be well with thee: Thou shall live long," &c.

Generally, that means that God's blessing follows the keeping of this command, and His curse the neglect of it. I might give many instances of both. One man tells us, that after fifty year's experience, he could certainly say that dutiful sons and daughters fared better than others, and that God blessed them more than others. even here. At a meeting held some time ago, in connection with prisons, it was brought out that a large proportion of all who ended there had begun their downward course by disobedience to parents. I find one criminal when asked, "Why are you here? so unlike the place!" replying, "I can answer all in one word, "I did not obey my parents!" When this command is broken, it is very often followed by some manifest judgment of God; for of nothing is God more jealous. At His bar, disobedience to parents will be reckoned no little sin, however lightly some may think of it now. Undutiful children, you who are disobedient, unkind, disrespectful to your parents, you cannot, you should not be happy. It cannot be "well" with you.

There can be no worse sign of any person, or of any age or country, than the want of respect for parental authority. It leads almost of necessity to the want of respect for the authority of God. Some people are thus coming to take a very desponding view of the times in which we live. I heard an experienced minister say, lately, to an assembly of about three thousand young people, in warning them against this, "There are some children who seem to have got a New Version of the Fifth Com-

mandment, and who read it thus,—'Parents, obey your children in all things, for this is well-pleasing to—the children!'" Alas for us! if this should describe the youth of our time.*

On the other hand, hear the beautiful description given by Solomon of filial piety:—

"My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. . . They shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck" (Prov. vi. 20–22; i. 9).

I cannot close without a word to the sons and daughters of widowed mothers, of whom there are so many among us. You, my beloved young friends, are doubly bound to keep before you this first command-

* "The Bible says that the land of Palestine had been given by the Lord God to other races before it was given to the Jewish race, and that these races did not continue in it; they committed evils which made them a curse to the land and a curse to themselves. The Israelites were told that if they committed the like evils, they should perish from off the good land to which they were going. Foremost among these evils, this commandment places the loss of honour for the father and mother. 'If you lose that,' it says, 'your case shall be like that of the people who will be driven out from before you. If you keep the honour of the father and mother, your days will be long upon that land.' I think, as the prophet assures us, that the sentence was fulfilled strictly to the people of Israel. I think, also, that it has been fulfilled to every nation of the old and of the modern world; that God gave the Persians, Greeks, and Romans. their land, as He gave the Jews their land : that He has given Britons, Romans, Saxons, Norwegians, the land on which we dwell; that every race has holden it of Him under the tenure of honouring fathers and mothers; that the days of no race have been long on the land when the honour of fathers has ceased in that race; that the days of no race will be long in any land when the honour of fathers and mothers shall cease in that race."-MAURICE'S "The Commandments considered as Instruments of National Reformation."

ment with promise. Your father has, as it were, committed your mother to your care,—to take his place, to honour, to protect, to provide for her. Did he not say, like the dying Jesus Himself, entrusting her to you, "Woman, behold thy son; son, behold thy mother! I leave her to thee." How sad it sometimes is, to see the waywardness, the want of thought and kindly consideration for their mother and for each other, on the part of fatherless boys and girls. Value your remaining parent. Make the trial as light to her as possible. Eldest sons especially, take your father's place, and be your mother's staff. And you who are orphans, take God to be both father and mother, and honour, and love, and serve Him.

Panhed.

O LORD, we have been undutiful and disobedient to Thee, our Heavenly Father. We have done those things which we ought not to have done, and we have left undone those things which it was our duty to do. Pardon us, we beseech Thee, for Jesus' sake. And we have been disobedient to our earthly parents. We have often grieved and vexed them. We have not given them the respect and love which they so justly deserve. We beseech Thee, pardon this our sin. Help us to honour and love them. Enable us to obey them in all things in the Lord. our obedience be prompt, and cheerful, and hearty. we count it a privilege to be kind to them when they are sick, to supply their wants when they are poor, and to cherish them in their old age. We thank Thee for our fathers and mothers, and for those who have been like fathers and mothers to us. Reward them for all their love and kindness to us. May their prayers for us be answered. May they have the joy of seeing us taking Thee as the Guide of our youth, and following Thee fully. May those of us who are the children of widowed mothers be a comfort and a help to them. Help those of us whose parents are now in glory to walk in their footsteps. And at length, may we meet our dear ones at Thy right Hand, through the merits of Jesus. Amen.





- 2 By Thy reconciling love Every stumbing-block remove; Each to each unite, endear; Come and spread Thy banner here.
- 3 Make us of one heart and mind, Courteous, pitiful, and kind; Lowly, meek, in thought and word,— Altogether like our Lord.
- 4 Let us for each other care, Each the other's burdens bear; To Thy Church a pattern give,— Show how true benevers live.
- 5 Let us then with joy remove To Thy family above; On the wings of angels fly,— Show how true believers die.





DARESAY you know two lines of a hymn that say,—

"I have been there, and still would go,
"Tis like a little heaven below."

That is said of God's house; and many, I know, can truly use the words of the hymn thus. I wish it could always be said, even in this sense. But I wish no less that it were always true of another place than the church, namely, of home—of your home. That is what ought to be a true description of each of our homes, —"'Tis like a little heaven below." I need scarcely say that it is not true of all our homes, and that while we often sing,—

"Home! home! sweet, sweet home!

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home,"

many of us do not feel anything of the kind. If it is so, things are not as they ought to be,—as God meant them to be. If any of us have an unhappy home, there must be a cause for it, and it is full time we were asking

whether that cause does not lie with ourselves. I wish to-day to speak of some things that make home unhappy—of some things which, if attended to, will make home happier than it is. I have already spoken of the importance of children being dutiful to their parents. Where this is awanting, home cannot be happy; it must be liker hell than heaven, for reverence, and obedience, and love, are the elements of heaven. I mean now to follow up this with a subject very much akin to it. I wish to set forth and illustrate to you what has been called "the Eleventh Commandment," obedience to which is necessary in order to our homes being at all happy homes.

It was on a Saturday night long ago, that a poorlooking travelling man came to the door of a manse in the south of Scotland, asking a night's lodging. He was taken in and sent to the kitchen, and when the minister's wife, as her custom was, went to catechise the servants, she thought it right to ask the stranger his questions too. She asked him, "How many commandments are there?" and when he answered, "Eleven," she said, "What a shame it is for you, a man with gray hairs, in a Christian country, not to know how many commandments there are! There is not a child six years old in this parish but could answer the question properly." And having ordered him his supper, she sent him off to a garret-room to bed. Good Samuel Rutherford, for he was the minister, heard the stranger praying, and on closer questioning, discovered that the beggar (as he seemed) was no other than Archbishop Usher, who had heard much of Mr Rutherford's godliness, and came, in this way, to judge for himself. It was arranged that he should preach next day, and when he gave out his text,—which we are about to take as the text of this address,—he said, "This may be reckoned the *Eleventh Commandment*." How the mistress and servants looked, it is not difficult to fancy. Will you turn to the text and make the discovery for yourselves? John xiii. 34:—

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another."

This was the word of Jesus to the eleven disciples, as they sat round the first Communion Table, after Judas had gone out to betray his Master. It was such a scene as we sometimes witness still, when the father of a family is about to die. He gathers his children around his bed, speaks to each of them words of counsel and tender affection, then gives them all some word in common, which he wishes them never to forget, some word that may serve as a bond of union among them when he is away, some word to be called to mind whenever there is any jarring or disagreement among them; and having solemnly charged them all to be sure and meet him again in heaven, he gives them the last kiss and dies. Would not such a word be sacred to you? Would it not be laid up in your heart as a

precious treasure? Would you not often think of it, and seek always to act upon it? Such was this word of Jesus here. He was about to leave the little family which He had gathered round Him. He knew there would be danger of disagreement and jealousy, such as there had been before, - one wishing to be better and greater than another,—and so He left with them, among His last words, which they could not but remember, this new commandment. He had never laid it on them before as He did now. It was new, because the motive was new,—His love to them. It was new, because the manner was new,-"As I have loved you." It was new, because the measure was new,—"As I have loved you." It was new, because it was to be the mark by which all were henceforth to know them as belonging to Him,—the Christian badge,—the Christian uniform, -"That ye love one another." It was intended first for Christ's immediate disciples, and then for all His believing people; but it takes a wider sweep than even that, and if it finds a suitable application anywhere. surely it finds it when applied to a family,-to the members of the same household. It thus comes to have an interest for vou.

I need not explain to you what it is to "love one another." Everybody knows what that means,—knows it better far than I can tell it. My business, therefore, must be to set before you some of the ways in which this command of Christ is to be carried out. And I do earnestly hope, not only that this eleventh command-

ment will be committed to memory, and be henceforth as well known to you as the other ten, but that every day you will seek to obey it, influenced most of all by the wondrous love which Christ has shewed to you. The great plague, in most families, is the presence of selfishness and bad temper. If these two evil spirits were cast out, the change would be so great, that some homes would find a picture of themselves in the man whom no man could bind, no, not with chains, neither could any man tame him: but who, after the devils were cast out of him, was found sitting at the feet of Jesus, peaceful, grateful, joyful, clothed and in his right mind. The great want in most families, alike where the members are young and where they are older, is the want of love. I sometimes see texts of Scripture placed above the chimney-piece. on cards, or in frames. Where there is a family, I think this "eleventh commandment" should at least have a place among the rest; and if there is not room for the whole text, then I should like to see, printed or painted in large letters, in beautiful colours, and set in a gilded frame, in every nursery, in every home, the word "LOVE!" It deserves to be displayed in the most prominent part of the room, so that it may meet the eye, and awaken an echo in the heart, at all times of the day, sometimes encouraging and sometimes reproving, till at length, when asked how all in that home were so happy, you might point to your motto, and say, -"We are ruled by that!"

How, then, are we to obey this great command?

First of all, by feeling the love which it enjoins, and then by shewing it. I am reminded here of what John, the beloved disciple, who dwells much on this very subject, says: "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." It is all very well to say you love. Nay, but shew your love: act your love. It is good to have loving feelings, but if these be of the right kind, there will also be loving words, loving looks, loving deeds, loving services, loving patience, loving sacrifice.

I shall try to gather up what I have to say in these five remarks:—You should shew your love to each other—I. In *kindness* to each other. II. In *sympathy* with each other. III. In *self-denial* for each other. IV. In *forbearance* with each other. V. In *forgiveness* of each other.

Brotherly love should shew itself-

I. In Kindness to each other.—As I remarked in a former address, where there is true love, there will be true kindness. The love will have to get *outlet*. Just fancy, now, that you love your mother as you ought to love her, and were not permitted to shew your love in any one way—that you were never allowed to give her one kind look, or to speak one kind word, or to do one kind act,—how painful it would be! You could hardly live under such a trial. And so in the case of brothers and sisters. If I do not see brotherly-*kindness*, I conclude that there is not brotherly-*love*.

1. There will be kind words. In most families, there are many unkind words, -- many scolding, fault-finding words,-many angry words. I would not like to get the character of a listener; for to listen at people's doors, when they don't know you are there, and to overhear what they are saying, is a very low and disreputable thing. A listener of this kind, is about as mean a creature as can anywhere be found. And yet I cannot help myself, - sometimes out of doors, and sometimes within doors,-hearing how young people speak to each other. They speak in such a high, sharp, angry tone, that one would need either to be deaf, or to put his fingers in his ears, not to hear them. How the bad temper that is in the young heart shews itself in these angry words. What threatening words one sometimes hears,-what words of ridicule,-what illnatured taunts,—what saying of irritating, provoking, vexing things,-what calling each other by names that give annoyance,-what "casting up" of unpleasant things, some previous fault or punishment, or the like, - what laughing at and mimicking each other, not in fun and good humour, but in sober earnest, on very purpose to provoke, or out of revenge! How many coarse words children speak to each other,-not fit to come from any one's lips, least of all from a child's. How many uncourteous words, running right in the face of what God's word commands. "Love as brethren," says Peter, "be pitiful, be courteous."

There is often a great want of this kindly bearing

among the members of families. Not to speak of kindness, there is sometimes scarcely common civility. There is a rudeness,—demanding things of each other,—driving each other out of the way,-pulling things out of each other's hands, when, if the request were made politely, to stand aside or to give what is wanted, it would be every way so much better. I do like to hear children asking each other politely for a thing which they want, saying, "I'll thank you, Tommy," for such a thing; or, "Will you be so kind, Mary, as lend me that for a little?" and always saying, "Thank you," when it is got. I like to see children in a kindly way bidding each other "Good night," shaking hands, and giving the parting kiss; and again, greeting each other when they meet in the morning. All this might be, and should be, and would be of great consequence, in the poorest as well as in the richest homes. It would change the whole face of many a family circle. Though you may say it is but words, it would soon tell on everything else. Children generally do what I have been suggesting, to a stranger. They should just do the same to those at home,-not in a stiff and formal way, which need not at all be. Many who are most mannerly to strangers. are rude and ungracious in their own family circle, as if there were no need for being polite there.

And do not, I pray you, tell tales in order to get another punished,—to get revenge,—to get into favour yourself. It is not *manly*, far less *Christian*. A "tell-tale" is an ugly character, either in the family

or out of it. He is one whom everybody dislikes, whom everybody regards with suspicion. Tell as much as you like to *God*, that you may pray for those who do wrong, but tell as little as possible of what is evil to other people. I wish each of you would commit these verses to memory, and act upon them, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people" (Lev. xix. 16). "The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds" (Prov. xxvi. 22). "Where no wood is, the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth" (Prov. xxvi. 20).

Oh, children, speak kindly to each other. You will never repent it. You may think little of a kind word, but I cannot tell you how valuable it is,—how long it is often remembered,—what good it often does. A beautiful feature in the character of the virtuous woman whom Solomon describes in the last chapter of Proverbs, is thus expressed:—"In her tongue is the law of kindness." I wish, with all my heart, that this were true of each of you.

"Oh deem it not an idle thing
A pleasant word to speak!
The face you wear, the thought you bring,
The heart may heal or break."

Did you ever notice that curious thing,—an echo? In some places among the mountains of Switzerland, or at the mouth of some "echoing cave," the echoes are wonderful. If you fire a gun, or sing, or whistle, or shout, or whisper, you get exactly what you give. And

so it has passed into a kind of proverb, "Kind words awaken kind echoes."* Oh what beautiful echoes you might awaken in your homes!

2. There will be kind looks. I need not say much about this. You who have occasion to mark each other's faces, know how much there is in a look:-a displeased look, an angry look, a sulky look, a scornful look, an off-taking look. And how many such looks there are, I need not tell you. How much they express, even when there is nothing spoken or done! How they can vex and provoke, and do a world of mischief! But if looks can do evil, they can also do good. There are kind looks, encouraging looks, comforting looks, winning looks. Just as there is much in the tone of voice in which you speak, so there is much in the expression of face which you wear. And just as "kind words produce kind echoes," so kind looks call forth a return in kind. You must have noticed what an effect the look you gave has sometimes had on a dog. If you looked angry, though you didn't say a word, how sober he would look, and at length skulk out of sight; and when you smiled, how he whisked and skipped about, as if he did not know what to do for joy. You have noticed, in the case of an infant, how you could, without difficulty, make him either laugh or cry, merely by a look. That tells what a look can do, for good or evil,—of what importance looks are. The truth is, others will look at you just as you look at them,-

^{*} See volume bearing this title.

kindly, or the reverse. You have looked into a mirror, and seen reflected there your own face. If you smiled, the face in the glass smiled; if you scowled, it scowled. As you looked pleased or cross, so did it. Just so is it in a family. Kind looks will be reflected, will lead to kind looks. They are like the sunshine which is reflected on everything on which it falls; every drop of dew on the grass, every bit of glass or earthenware on the dunghill, reflects a little sun; and so your happy, smiling, sunny looks, would often dispel the clouds that gather at home, and all would be happy, smiling, sunny, like yourselves. Such looks cost little, and yet they are worth more than gold or silver.

I have heard one of the greatest missionaries of our time, when addressing a company of students who were preparing for the Christian ministry, and urging them to be open, and kindly, and winning in their looks, if they would win men to Christ, tell of a missionary who went among the heathen, and, though a godly man, utterly failed to gain them, just for want of this. His successor, the first time he went among the people, won all hearts at once. And how? He did not know a word of their language, but going up to a group of men, he kindly put his hand on the shoulder of one of them, and smiled in his face. They all smiled, and from that moment were his friends! Who shall tell the power of kind looks?

3. There will be kind deeds. Time would fail me to tell how many kind things you might do to each other,—for each other,—to promote each other's comfort

and happiness. If you would just be on the watch and try, for a single day, you would be surprised at the result. And you should be thus on the watch and trying, every day,—always,—all of you.

I have heard of a mother who was in the habit of asking her children, each night before they went to bed, what they had done that day to make others happy. It would be well for the members of each family to ask themselves at night, what they have done that day to make each other happy? How much that is kind, and helpful, and pleasant, any young person might do for any other! How many little services of love you might render, and might think of rendering without being asked, which is the best of it all! Why should not things like this be more common—one offering to help another who has more work to do than he can overtake, never thinking, and still less saying, "It is no work of mine;" or, "I have my own concerns to look after;" or, "He never helps me;"-one who has been from home, bringing some little present to the rest; -one who is at home, writing to those who are away;—one who is well, doing everything that can be thought of for the sick one; -- one who is further advanced, patiently and kindly helping the younger ones with their lessons, and so relieving an over-wrought mother? So I find one young boy saying to his little brother, "Mamma must not have to teach anything twice, She teaches me, and I must teach you, and you must learn fast and teach our little sister;" adding, by way of inducement, "If you say your lessons well, I'll read you a chapter of 'Line upon Line.'" Just make the experiment for one day, of trying how much you can do to make home happy,—to please and help your brother or sister, or others, and I am sure you will have difficulty at night in counting all up,—so many ways will have opened up which you never thought of.

"It wants a loving spirit,

Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by his love."

I close my remarks on this head, by saying, that if you love each other, you will pray for each other. And if done in a right spirit, this is one of the greatest of all kindnesses, as it is one of the most tender of all bonds, and will be likely to lead to all the rest. If you saw a brother drowning, and could not save him yourself, you would ask others to do what you could not: you would beseech them: you would cry to them,—in other words, you would pray to them to do it. And when you see a brother or sister doing what is wrong,—passionate, fretful,-disobedient: when you have reason to fear that they do not love God,—that they have never come to Jesus,-that they are still unsaved; if you care for them, if you love them, how can you but cry to God to save them—to bring them to Christ—to give them His Holy Spirit-to make them His dear children, and guide them safe to glory?

II. Brotherly love will shew itself in SYMPATHY for each other.—To "sympathise" is to feel for one, or rather to feel with one—to enter into the feelings of others, and share either their sorrow or their joy. I can suppose you to be a little orphan girl. You meet with another who has newly become an orphan, like yourself. She is weeping as if her heart would break, saying, she has no one now to care for her, has nothing to live for, and wishes she were dead and laid beside her mother in the churchyard. You throw your arms round her, and tell her you can understand her feelings, for you are an orphan too, and once felt just as she does; but that the Lord has wonderfully cared for you, and raised up friends to love you, and above all, has made you happy in Jesus, the Orphan's Friend, and that He is able and willing to do as much for her. And as you speak to her, her grief is lessened, and she breathes more freely, and some rays of hope and of comfort brighten up her face. You gave her all you could give—your sympathy, and it has lightened her burden, and relieved her sorrowful heart. and done what nothing else could do.

I have heard of a girl who, after having lost a little brother, went back to school; and I have this account of her from one of her companions; "All the time she studied her lesson, she hid her face in her book and cried. I felt so sorry, that I laid my face on the same book, and cried with her. Then she looked up, and put her arms around my neck; but I do not know why she said I had done her so much good." It was the power of sympathy.

Now, that is a power for good, which all of you can exercise. You can all give that. When there is sorrow, or disappointment, or sickness,—when there is any trial, be it light or heavy, pressing on another's mind, there is nothing you can give, to be compared to sympathy. I am surprised and sorry to see so little of it in some families—so little weeping with those who weep: so little rejoicing with those who rejoice: so many sorrowing and rejoicing alone! Sympathy is important and would be valuable a hundred times in a day, in any family, when any little trouble or sorrow comes, but especially in times of sickness. It is wonderful the effect of even inquiring for the sick one-asking how he is-what sort of a night he has had-saying you hope he is rather better and will soon be well again, and you trust that Jesus will be with him on his sick bed. I am sometimes amazed, in inquiring at children for a little brother or sister or other friend who has been ill, when they say they "don't know!" Why do they not know? Had they lost their tongue, or had they not rather lost their heart, and forgotten to do their duty?

Few things seem to me more beautiful, than kindly concern for each other, thus shewn by the young people of a family, sympathising in such a time of sorrow, quietly and on tip-toe moving about the house, lest the noise should disturb; bringing little presents which might have been kept to themselves; sitting by the bedside of the invalids, reading to them, singing to them, telling them what has been going on during the day; running to

get their medicine for them, or anything in the shape of food which they can take. I have been delighted thus to see two young sisters watching over each other, in turn nursing each other, cheering and comforting each other, not as a duty, but as a most precious privilege which they would give up to no one else. But I have also seen the reverse,—unconcern and noise and downright vexation, even where a sister was dying. I have actually known, when an orange or a bunch of grapes or a pot of jelly had been brought to a poor invalid girl, whose hard and painful cough and pale face might have melted any heart,—I have known of a greedy, heartless boy stealing and devouring these little delicacies. O dear children, will you not rather sympathise with each other, and weep together, and make others' sorrow your own?

And so you should rejoice in others' joy. When your brother has got up in his class, and has come home with the joyful news that he is dux at last; when he has carried off a much-desired prize for which he has laboured hard; when he has got some valuable present; when his birth-day has come round, and each one is bent on making him happy; when he is raised up from a sick bed, and begins to move about again,—give him your hearty sympathy. Do not grudge him his joy. Do not look askance at him. Do not in any way damp his gladness. Make his joy your own.

III. Brotherly love will shew itself in Self-denial.

—Selfishness is the great cause of unhappiness,—of

quarrelling and all mischief, in many homes. Where children are unselfish, they must agree,—they cannot fail to be happy. But the reverse meets us on every hand, in most painful and humbling ways. Self comes up at every turn; and because it does not get the best of everything, there is no doing with it. I find the question, "What is want of love?" answered thus: "It is giving ourselves the first and biggest place in our hearts: letting self, which should come last, come first." In the matter of getting the best seat at table; in the matter of food,—fruit—sweatmeats—dress,—and other things, it is too common to find each wanting to be helped first, and to get the most and the best of everything, even though others should get little or nothing. The consequence is, that there is discontent and ill-will -each fighting to get what he wants, and grumbling and thinking himself ill-used when he does not get it; till comfort and peace are gone. You see it in the very baby, who wants to get everything that comes in his way, -not content unless he is made the chief object of attention, and when thwarted, having his revenge in his own peculiar way. I was told of a fine characteristic in a boy who died not long ago, that he would never say at table what he wanted, till all the rest were helped! and then he asked for what was least wanted by others. The worst of it is, that the bigger babies are too like the little ones.

Sometimes,—not from choice but from necessity, in order to keep the peace, and prevent envy and jealousy,

-when mothers are buying dresses for their girls, they are obliged to buy them all alike, and to have them made alike and trimmed alike, down to every band and button; for, if they were different, each would think the other had got better than she. I once offered a friend a copy of a little book for his three children. I thought one copy was enough, as the books were all the same. But, no. He said, "I must have three or none, otherwise there will be no satisfying them." I am not sure but they had even to be all of the same colour. Two of these books were thus very much thrown away. Now, it should not be so. The fight, if any, should be as to who can be got to take the best or prettiest thing,—the little ones saying, "Oh, give it to Johnnie; he is the eldest;" and Johnnie saying, "Mary is the youngest; let her have it,"-no one wishing to take the best! And then, each should be content and pleased with what he gets,-not grumbling, or complaining, or thinking "I should have got something better." "In honour preferring one another," says Scripture. "By love serve one another."

IV. Brotherly love will shew itself in Forbearance and Patience.—Have you not been struck with that beautiful description of brotherly love, in the thirteenth of first Corinthians, "Love suffereth long, and is kind; envieth not; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things"? In every family,

there is much to provoke and annoy, much to bear with, much that is fitted to make one lose his temper, so that, if it were not for this love of which we are speaking, things would be constantly going wrong. But love enables one to bear a great deal, and keeps the wheels running smoothly. Especially is it the part of the elder members of the family, to bear with the younger, as it is the duty of the younger to pay deference to the elder. You have got some unkind, rude, impudent thing said or done to you. Your first impulse is to give the like in return,—to pay the evil-doer back in his own coin,-to speak, or to strike, as he did to you. Do you ask, "What should I do?" I say, Bear it. Try to be like God, - "slow to wrath." Be "slow to speak, slow to wrath." Some one gives the adviceto "count ten before you speak," when you are angry. By that time, it may be safe for you to speak. Even in the worst case, "a soft answer turneth away wrath." Oh, for more of the "soft answer," alike in the case of old and young! It has a mighty power. There is a saying, "He begins the fight who strikes the second blow." That is true of the tongue, as well as of the hand. Dear young friends, remember that, and forbear.

I spoke of *striking!* I fancy there is such a thing. And yet, to strike a brother or sister, is to do what Cain did,—is next to being a *murderer*. Such a one only required to go a little further, and he would have been another Cain. "Whosoever hateth his brother *is a murderer*" (1 John iii. 15). Some of us have thus much more to do

with the breaking of the sixth commandment than we suppose, and much less with the keeping of the eleventh. When I see passion boiling, the eye "looking daggers" (as we say), the cheek flushed, the lips quivering, the hand uplifted to strike, I wish I could whisper into that boy's ear, nay, that I could speak with trumpettongue-not so much this new commandment as that old one "Thou shalt not KILL!" The stone, or the book, or the stool, or whatever comes in the way at the moment—it matters not to him what it may be-which he is réady to throw, may break an arm, or put out an eye, or take a life. For the time being, Satan is master. He is leading the boy "captive at his will." He is in Satan's hand, and it would take little more to bring that youth to the murderer's cell. Oh, the horror of thinking, when one's passion has cooled down, "I might have been a murderer!" We may well, after such an outburst, go to our knees, and thank God that He has kept us from being guilty of our brother's blood. Dear children, boys especially, NEVER STRIKE; never lift your hand against a brother or sister. Ask yourselves, "How shall I wish I had acted, if my brother or sister were soon to be taken away from me? Let me do now as I shall then wish I had done." Let it be so, that if you were to die, those who mourned over you would have no sad thought in connection with you,would be able to kiss your cold hand, and to say, as a weeping sister once did, "Mother, THAT HAND NEVER STRUCK ME!"

"If I meet with railing tongues,
Why should I return their railing?
Since I best revenge my wrongs,
By my patience never failing.

"I'll not willingly offend,

Nor be easily offended;

What's amiss, I'll strive to mend,

And endure what can't be mended.

"May I be so watchful still,
O'er my humours and my passion,
As to speak and do no ill,
Though it should be all the fashion."

V. Brotherly love will shew itself in Forgiveness.— It is the part of love to forgive. A mother can forgive, when none else can, because she loves. God can forgive, when none else can, because He loves. And if we love like Him, we shall forgive like Him. To be unforgiving, whether young or old, is one of the worst characters that could be given to one. I can hardly fancy a brother or sister, in early life or in advancing years, refusing to forgive, whatever the offence may have been. It is unnatural. It is monstrous. Surely a Christian cannot say, "I never forgive!" Those who sin, should know how to forgive. Oh I wonder we cannot forgive, when I hear that word, "Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you:"-I wonder at it, when I hear the Divine voice again saying, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any one have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye: "—I wonder at it, when I hear that voice from the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:"—I wonder at it, when I hear even a dying man praying for those who stoned him to death, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Surely after all this, we may forgive,—ay, forgive anything!

Dear children, learn to love each other. Pray that you may love each other. Elder sisters, we look to you for much. You should set the example of loving. You should be very much like a mother to the younger, doing much of a mother's work, and exerting much of a mother's influence among them. I read of one the other day who had been a "sister-mother,"—a most sweet and honourable name. That is what all elder sisters should aspire to. I know of none who can do so much, in the families to which they belong, for the carrying out of this eleventh commandment. And, boys! you should be your sisters' guardians and protectors and friends, watching over them, shewing kindness to them, -not fighting with them but for them, - not using your greater strength for selfish ends, but to defend and help them. And as you grow up, still remember that this law is binding on you as ever. Even when no longer children, "let brotherly love continue." It will be as necessary, and as beautiful, then as now. It is a beautiful sight to see brothers and sisters, after they have grown up, still loving each other, -walking together, interested in each other, bearing with each other, doing all they can to help each other; and the way to secure it, is, as with other good things,—to begin early!

Oh love one another; for if there be *love*, what may you not do for each other? Love and kindness will do anything. It will tame the very lion, and make a lamb of him. It has done it. The kind hand that will pluck the thorn out of the lion's paw, may lead him about with a straw. And even though you do not get your love and kindness at once returned, still love and be kind. It will conquer in the end. There is a saying, "Love conquers all things." We are told of a fierce and cruel pirate, in a wild and solitary region, that his hearing the cooing of the dove, mournful and loving, had such an effect on him, that when nothing else would tell on him, that weaned him from his wicked ways. And if a dove,—how much more a sister—a brother!

Oh to have our homes on earth "nurseries for heaven"! Our earthly homes, the sweetest and best, will soon be broken up, and one link of the family chain after another will be withdrawn. Let us live, and let us love, with this before us. And let us make sure of an interest in the love of Christ,—that love which will help us to love, at once as the pattern and motive,—that love which will make up for the want of every other,—that love which is everlasting.

Phaned.

O LOVING and gracious Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast gathered us into families. We thank Thee for our homes,—our comfortable, happy, sweet homes. We thank Thee for loving brothers and sisters and friends. We ask Thee to give them Thy best blessing. Make them all Thy dear children,-brethren of Jesus, the Elder Brother. Let them know the joy of being reconciled to Thee, through the precious Blood of Christ. Make us to be to them, all that we ought to be,-loving, kind, patient, forgiving. Keep us from all unkindness of thought, or feeling, or look, or word, or act. Help us to stamp out the first spark of anger, or envy, or revenge. Cure our evil temper. Turn us from our wilful, selfish, unbrotherly ways. Let us be united to each other by the bond of a common union to Christ,—of a common love to Christ. And as we grow up, let us never grow cold and distant to each other, or careless about each other's welfare. Keep us from taking offence at each other. May others have cause to say when they see us, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity!" May there be much of heaven about our earthly homes. Save any of our dear ones who may yet be out of Christ. Preserve and bless any of them who may be far away,on the sea, or in foreign lands. O that each of our families may be, at last, an undivided family in heaven! We ask all in the name of our blessed Redeemer. Amen.





- 2 'Tis He my daily food provides, And all that I can want besides; And when I close my sleeping eye, I rest in peace, for He is nigh.
- 3 Then shall I not for ever love This gracious God who reigns above? For very good indeed is He, To love a little child like me.





OME time ago, I proposed that our young people should join together in a crusade against a monster sin, which was working

sad havoc among us, and grievously provoking God, while yet sadly little thought of by ourselves—the sin of UNTRUTHFULNESS. I trust that since then, many have thought earnestly on the subject, and that many a deadly blow has been given to that gigantic foe - Falsehood. In a previous address, in this volume, I sought to summon our youthful forces again to the battle, and sounded the bugle as loudly and clearly as I could, in the hope of calling the attention of some, who did not seem to be aware of it, or who thought little of it, to the presence of another monster of the same tribe among us, against which we were bound unitedly and manfully to fightthe sin of DISOBEDIENCE,—of Undutifulness to Parents. May I not hope, that some honest efforts have been made in that direction also? And now, I must again put the trumpet to my mouth, and blow a shrill blast, as

yet another hateful monster comes in sight, to whom we must, no less courageously, give battle, and, as I trust, to some good purpose. I shall explain what I mean.

The Lord Jesus was once, on his way to Jerusalem, walking along the border-land between Samaria and Galilee. As he drew near a village, a mournful company came in sight. There were ten men, every one of whom was a leper. I suppose the fact that they were all labouring under the same loathsome disease, that everybody shunned the very touch or sight of them, and that they were shut out from all society, drew them to each other. What a mournful spectacle? With their clothes rent, the head bare, and a covering upon the upper lip, when others are approaching they stand still, and cry aloud with lamentable voice, so as to warn them that they are about to meet lepers-" Unclean! Unclean!" And thus they did, when Jesus came in sight:-they stood afar off; but when they knew it was Jesus, their cry was, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." He did not pass by on the other side. He did not shrink back from them in horror, like most others. He pitied them. He did for them what man could not do :- He sent them to the priests, to be restored by them to all their old privileges,—to their homes and families and friends, -to mingle with the other worshippers of God again; and as they went, they were made whole. Even as they walked along, their leprosy-which no power of man could cure, left them; and who shall tell what happy

men they were? I fancy I see them leaping for joy,whenever the priests had declared them clean, rushing to their friends, receiving their congratulations, scarcely knowing what to do with themselves for gladness. "And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks; and he was a Samaritan" (the unlikeliest of them all). "And Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger!" I think I hear the loving Saviour, mournfully asking, "Where are the nine?" What do you think of their conduct? One out of ten, coming back, to say "Thank you" for what had been done for them! Am I wrong in denouncing their conduct as heartless and sinful,—their sin, the sin of unthankfulness,—of INGRATITUDE? That is the subject which is now to be brought before you. I once thought of taking as my text, the words, "Where are the nine?" We shall, however, rather look at the duty than at the sin:-the duty of Gratitude,-to God-to others. You will find the text in the last three words of Colossians iii. 15:-

"Be ye thankful."

I ask you to notice:—I. Things to be thankful for. II. Some of the ways of shewing our thankfulness. III. The sin of unthankfulness.

I. THINGS TO BE THANKFUL FOR .- And here I must just say, that I don't well know where to begin, and still less, where to end. The occasions of thankfulness are so many, that I could not count them, far less tell them. They are everywhere around us,—in our homes, in our schools, in our churches, in our streets, in the town, in the country. I cannot look out at the window, I cannot go along the street, I cannot take a walk into the country, without being reminded what causes I have for thankfulness. When I am among the rich or the poor, among the healthy or the sick, among the wise or the ignorant,—if my heart is at all in its right place, if I see things at all as I ought to see them, I see the text reflected in everything as in a mirror, written in such big letters that the dullest eye might see them, "BE YE THANKFUL!" I hear the echo, coming from all quarters, in sweetest tone and yet so loud that the deafest ear might hear, "BE YE THANKFUL!"

I must do what I can, in the way of trying to sum up these,—of gathering them into two or three bundles, so that we may look at them for a little. You should be thankful,—I. For *Providential Mercies*: 2. for the Means of Grace: 3. and most of all, for Christ and Salvation.

I. You should be thankful for *Providential Mercies*.— I have made use of a long word, which some of you might have some difficulty in spelling or in writing, but which it is not difficult to understand. I think the light will begin to dawn when I take the first seven letters of it by themselves,—*p-r-o-v-i-d-e*. By "provi-

dential mercies," I mean the things God has *provided* for your comfort and well-being, in body and mind. These include—

- (1.) Your Food. How many children are there, think you, round about you, who do not know what it is to get a comfortable meal?—who are often crying for bread, and there is none to give them ?--who would think it a dainty dish if they had your plate of steaming porridge in the morning or at night, and would not much mind what they got to it, -milk, or treacle, or sugar? You don't know what it is to be starved. Some of you never knew what it was to want a meal; and yet how many of you have stopped, without needing to be told, ere you swallowed God's food, to thank God the Giver for it? How many of you, while enjoying what God had so kindly provided, ever thought of or thanked the Hand that spread your table? The little birds, each time they take their sip of water, look up, as if to thank God for their little drink, and seem almost to rebuke our boys and girls, who can eat and drink to the full, without once lifting up a thankful eye to heaven.
- (2.) Your Clothing. Did you ever walk down the street, in one of the poorer districts of a large city, on a winter's day? Did you ever see these little, half-naked creatures, in the arms of miserable-looking mothers who were coming out of the public-houses, and those other ragged, hat-less, shoe-less children, running at their side, with shivering limbs and chattering teeth,

any clothes they had, worthy of the name, having been pawned for drink? Did you ever contrast their clothing with your own, though yours was coarse, or well-worn, or well-patched, telling of a mother's thoughtful care? Or, as you put on the new jacket or the new dress, did your thoughts ever rise above your father, or the tailor, or the dressmaker, to God;—and, if you got the length of saying "thank you" to them, was there ever such a thing as your being found in your new clothes, on your knees, somewhere, alone, thanking God for His gift!

(3.) Your Health. I was lately in the Infirmary, and among other sufferers, of whom some were able to move about, while others were in bed, I saw a little boy lying there, far away from his home, who had come to get one of his toes taken off, as the only hope of saving his life. He was unable to relieve the weariness of a sickbed, as some of you can do, by interesting and useful reading; for as he lay, twirling round something on a string, when I offered him a little book telling of Jesus' love for the little ones, he said he could not read. And how many you may see, in going down these Infirmary stairs, with pale faces and bandaged arms, or supported by crutches; and how many more are there, not able to move about at all; and these not only men and women, but young boys and girls! And here are you, independent of doctors and of medicine,-for the most part, strong and vigorous! How many thanked God, this morning, for their

health? What would some, who drive in handsome carriages, and have servants to wait on them, and plenty of money and other things for which you envy them,—what would they not give to have your rosy cheeks and sturdy limbs,—to be able to walk on their own feet, and help themselves, like you? It is God who has made you to differ.

(4.) Your Learning: Think of that sick boy in the Infirmary, unable to read, or even to understand the pictures that hang on the walls of his ward. Think of the many whose minds are an utter blank, and who are, therefore, little above the beasts that perish! Think of those whom none will have as apprentices or servants, or anything, because they have got no education,-who cannot even be message boys or message girls, because they cannot read the addresses on the letters and parcels they would have to deliver, and who cannot or will not learn now, because they have lost the best time for learning,—the time of early youth! And you have your schools, and books, and painstaking teachers, and reading of almost every sort, to instruct and entertain! And yet how many of you, instead of thanking God for all this,—for these precious opportunities, these means of enjoyment and of usefulness, which are more valuable than thousands of pounds, -think it hard that you should have to learn, and cry over your lessons, and can sometimes hardly be got to school at all. Think of those who cannot read the letters that come to them from their dearest friends, but must

get others to read these to them (however confidential they may be), and to write letters in reply, because they never themselves learned to write. Think of the blankness of mind of such, even when they come to be in earnest about their souls. Late one night, a woman, the mother of a family, came to me from a distant part of the city. She had been awakened to a sense of her sin, and was asking, in her own way, "What must I do to be saved?" I did what I could to direct her to the Lamb of God; but she had been a Roman Catholic, and had never learned to read, and I found it most difficult to get her to take in anything; and when she left me, and I would fain have given her books and tracts to read, that had been helpful to others, she could make nothing of them. How I blessed God that night, that Protestantism at least educated the people, and so prepared the way for their receiving gospel truth!

(5.) Your *Reason*. What an unspeakable gift!—a mind that can understand, the ability to learn, an intelligent eye, the power of thinking and reasoning and acting for yourself, — did you ever think how thankful you should be for it? Not long since, I intimated a collection that was to be made, especially among the young people of our city and in our schools, on behalf of an Institution for Imbecile Children,—that is, children who want this Reason, of which I have been speaking. Many children gave their pence or their shillings:—was it as a thank-offering, that such an Institution was not needful for *them?* That poor boy

on the street, whom other children are heartlessly teazing and tormenting,—(one of the greatest of all cruelties),—and whose very look tells that he wants the faculties which you have,—you might have been like him;—did you ever thank God that you were not? I ask again,—how many thanked God this morning, for their reason?

- (6.) Your Parents and Friends and Homes.—Many have none. In all parts of the land there are fatherless, motherless, friendless, homeless children. Many are next to having none;—many, I was going to say, worse than if they had none. What think you of this description of a home, which I lately met with?—
 - "No sun above, no lofty sky,
 No breezy breath of living air,
 The heavy, stagnant, stifling fog,
 Crept here, and there, and everywhere.
 - "Down seven steep and broken stairs,
 Its chill unwelcome way it found,
 And darkened, with a deeper gloom,
 A low, damp chamber underground.
 - "A glimmering light was burning there,
 Beside a woman on a bed;
 A worn-out woman, ghastly pale,
 Departing to the peaceful dead.
 - "Two little boys in thread-bare clothes, Stood white and trembling by her side, And listening to his mother's words, The younger of them sadly cried.

"The elder boy shed not a tear,

Nor stirred a moment from his place,
But with a corner of the sheet,

He wiped his mother's cold damp face." &c. *

And yet there are far worse and sadder homes than that, where there is not only want and sickness, but wickedness, drunkenness, unkindness, disregard of God. Dear children, thank God for your fathers and mothers and friends, however poor; and for your homes, however humble. Many of you have kind parents and happy homes. Some of you who are orphans, have those who act a parents' part to you. Never think lightly of them. God gave them to you as among the best gifts of His hand. Let no day pass without telling Him how much you thank Him for His goodness.

(7.) Deliverance from Danger. Perhaps I am speaking to children who once fell into a river or canal, or were driven over by a cart or carriage, or were caught in a machine, or cut by a knife, or had a boiling kettle overturned on them, or were nearly drowned at sea, or lay at death's door in a fever or other illness. And God delivered you,—raised you up, when you might have been—in hell. Have you ever thanked Him? Have you?

Such are some of God's providential mercies. Every one of them has a voice, for those who have an ear to hear, and their language clear and unmistakable, blended in beautiful concert, is, *Be ye thankful!*

^{* &}quot;Mother's Last Words." By Mrs Sewell.

2. You should be thankful for the Means of Grace.— By this I mean the provision God has made for our souls-just as we have been looking at what He has done for our minds and our bodies. Here, again, what cause for thankfulness! We are not like the other creatures of God's hand that move about upon our earth. We do not live like them. We do not die like them. We have sins which they have not. We have souls which they have not. We need to think about other things than merely eating and drinking and clothing and enjoyment. We need to think about pardon and salvation - about the judgment that is coming, and the long, long eternity that will follow. It concerns even children to be earnestly asking-"What about these? What shall we do for our souls ?"

Under this head notice—(I.) Your Bible:—telling you about yourself and about God,—about your sin and His mercy,—about your guilt, and the blood of Jesus that can wash it all away,—about your wicked heart, and the Holy Spirit who can renew it and make it pure and clean. Oh the blessedness of having the Bible, God's letter of love to the sons of men! It tells you of your danger, and points out the way of escape. It contains in it the Gospel, the Good News, and well may it be prized. If you were suffering from some loathsome and deadly disease, and no one could do anything for you, all medicines losing their power, the skill of the best

doctors being baffled, and if I were to come to you and put into your hand a paper telling of a medicine that would infallibly cure you, of a physician who could restore you to health, and pluck you back from the very grave: would I not be right welcome? and would you not thank me more than you could well express? And this is what the Bible does, when it tells us of the blood of Jesus, which cleanseth from all sin,—when it points us to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,—to a Divine Saviour, who is able to save to the uttermost. If you had lost your way, and had got in among pits and quagmires, which threatened every moment to swallow you up, till your strength was all but gone, and all hope had left you; and if I brought to you a chart or map which gave clear instructions as to the way, and told of a guide who would make all plain, and would never leave you till danger was past,-how you would thank me! And that is what the Bible does, when it shews God's way of saving the sinner by believing on Jesus, and tells us of the Holy Spirit, who will first lead us to Christ, and then guide us on, all the way to heaven. And yet how often do we think the reading of this blessed Book an irksome task, preferring the silliest story-book to it? Surely if David could thank God as he did for his Bible, which, at the furthest, stopped at Ruth, we should praise Him with overflowing heart for our Bible, so far beyond this!

(2.) Your Sabbaths:—with their bells ringing on the Lord's day morning, and summoning you to the house

of prayer; with their churches, where Christ is offered to the young as well as to the old; with their Sabbath schools and loving teachers longing and praying for your salvation, seeking, above all, that you may be brought to decide for Christ in your early days; with their happy evenings, when in some homes at least, the old family Bible is brought out, and each in turn reads the story of redeeming love, and after the children have been questioned, and the psalm or hymn has been sung, all are affectionately commended to the care of Israel's Shepherd. Well may we welcome it, and be grateful for it, singing truthfully—

"For thee we long and pray,
O blessed Sabbath morn!
And all the week we say,
Oh! when wilt thou return?
Come, come away,
Day of glad rest,
Of days the best,
Sweet Sabbath day!"

(3.) Prayer. How glad and thankful you are, when evil befals you, to have a home to run to,—a mother's ear and heart to pour your little grief into,—a father's help to seek. And such a help, dear children, is prayer. It is fleeing for refuge to God. It is pouring out the heart to God. It is crying for help to God. You may be far from home, but God is ever near. You may have no friend at hand to advise or help, but the Lord is always within call. You may be downcast, perplexed, poor, ill, solitary, dying,—the door of prayer

is ever open to you, with God's ear and God's hand close beside you. And then there is the prayer-meeting, where others can join with you, and help in pleading with God! Some of you once loved it,—never were happier anywhere,—never so enjoyed anything. Do you thank God for prayer and for the prayer-meeting now? If I were to give any of you the key of my door, and to say, "Use that whenever you like; come to me at all hours of the day or night; come for everything you want; you will find me always in my room, and always ready to help you;" I am sure you would say, "You are so kind; thank you." And thus God gives you the key of His door, and tells you to use it much,—often,—always. That key is—prayer in the name of Jesus.

- (4.) Christian Companionships, which are so helpful in the way of giving encouragement, and sympathy, and impulse, at times when these are greatly needed. Who shall tell how precious and stimulating are these walks and conversations and meetings for prayer, when young Christians can enjoy each other's society, and those letters, and agreements to pray, for special objects and at special times, when separated for a season from each other. How thankful you should be for these.
- (5.) Christian Books and other religious publications. How dependent we are, on what we read, alike for enjoyment and profit. Besides the Bible itself, how many books we have, of Christian biography, of missionary travel, of sacred song, of Bible illustration, of religious anecdote, all more or less suited to the young. What

a help the Sabbath-school library is. The books of a religious kind for the young, that issue from the American press alone, are said to be at the rate of a volume per day, all the year round. In times of sickness,—in the quiet leisure hours of a week-day evening, or of the Sabbath,—when you cannot get to the house of God or enjoy the society of friends,—what refreshment, what interesting company you find in your book! It is often more to the mind and soul than a meal is to the body. Is it your habit to thank God for the one as you do for the other?

I have only mentioned a few of your spiritual privileges. These, and others of which 1 might have spoken, call loudly for your gratitude. They all say to you, "Be ye thankful!"

3. You should be thankful, most of all, for *Christ and Salvation*.—This is the best of all God's gifts—the most costly, the most precious. All the others are as nothing without this. We can never rightly thank God for anything, till we get this; and so, though I have taken this up *last*, it really comes *first*. It is only when we can say, with reference to this, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!" that we can rightly say, "We thank Thee," for anything else. Yes, dear children, I would fain have you to begin here. You can never be really and rightly thankful children, till you have got Christ and salvation. And how thankful should you be for *that*!

If I had saved your life at the risk of my own,

how thankful you would be to me! You could not hear me speak, or read my letters, or look at my portrait, or listen to the mention of my name, without your heart filling. Your gratitude would ever be welling up, like a spring which nothing can dry, and if ever you were tempted to be unthankful, there would need to be but the mention of that great event in your history, to throw you into what Dr Chalmers calls "a flood of tenderness."

If you had been in a block of workshops which I lately saw blazing, and if one of the helmeted firemen, axe in hand, had cut his way through the smoke and flames, creeping along the floors, feeling his way up the staircase, once and again almost suffocated and at the point of turning back, but persevering till he found you, and then bearing you back, at the risk of his life, all breathless and bleeding, blackened and bruised, with scars which he should bear to his dying day,—would not your heart rise in thanksgiving every time you thought of it—every time you saw his well-known but sadly disfigured face? Would you not find out his house, and ask what you could do for him, and never have done thanking him?

And how much more ought there to be this feeling, when it is not your *life*, but your *salvation*, that you owe to Another. Has God given up His only-begotten Son to do all this and infinitely more for you? Has He actually done all this for you—has He *saved* you? Are you now rejoicing in Jesus as your own Saviour, and

looking forward to heaven as your home? Can you sing with glad heart, "He took me from a fearful pit"? Then I know what gratitude must be yours; how you have thanked God already, and will thank Him while you live. At least, I know, it should be so; there is abundant cause for it. I hear a voice coming from the cross; ay, I hear it coming down from heaven, "Be ye thankful!" I wonder how many of our beloved young people have had any experience of this,—how many can thank God as the God of their Salvation! I know there are some, even among those who are very young. Such may well say, "I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." In the coming eternity the cause for thankfulness will never cease; it will always be increasing, and this will itself be part of the blessedness of heaven.

"And there, with all the blood-bought throng,
From sin and sorrow free,
I'll sing the new eternal song
Of Jesus' love to me."

It might be a great help to thankfulness, if we were to keep what I might call a "Book of Mercies;"—not a mere journal or diary, recording ordinary events, but a record of the mercies received from God, or the kind services of others. I have had the pleasure, for some years past, of presenting one of the prizes, given in a school at the close of the school-session, to the pupil who had kept the fullest record of the number of kindnesses received during the session. When the experiment was first begun, it seemed strange, and some

difficulty was felt, but when the trial was fairly made, and acts of kindness were looked for and recognised, the difficulty was to select—to make a choice—the number was found to be so large. I need hardly say that the girl who carried off such a prize as this,—who excelled in discovering and recording the kind things said and done by others,—must have been, to say the least, one of the happiest girls in the school. I should not say she was at all necessarily the one who had received most kindness, but the one who saw and felt it most; for it is in this that the difference between one and another mainly lies,—the seeing of "things to be thankful for."

I have often, in the course of my visiting as a minister of Christ, among all classes of people, been reminded of those beautiful lines by Archbishop Trench:—

"Some murmur when their sky is clear,
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.
And some with thankful hearts are filled,
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's great mercy, gild
The darkness of their night.

"In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied;
And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has in their aid
(Love that nought ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made,"

- II. Let us now look at some of the ways of shewing our thankfulness.—It is not enough to *feel* thankful; we should *shew* it. Thankfulness is like love:—if it is real and deep, it will *appear*; it will be impossible to keep it back. I have two remarks to make here. We should shew our thankfulness,—I. In *Word*; 2. In *Deed*.
- I. In IVord. Tell the Lord that you are thankful to Him. Do not be content with saying you feel grateful. Do not say, "He knows it; and a thankful heart is the principal thing." It is quite true. But the same might be said in the case of others,—of those at home, for instance. They know you are grateful for the kindness you receive, but none the less are you called to speak your gratitude. Your parents and friends like to hear you express it, and they have a right to this. I fear there is far too little thanking of them, in the case of most of our children. It would often be a balm to their hearts, and encourage and cheer them more than you can well conceive, if your toiling and anxious fathers and mothers heard you expressing your sense of their kindness, thanking them for it all, shewing that it is not all just taken as matter of course, so that while you would thank anyone else for what they do, it seems quite unnecessary to thank them. If you have not begun yet, it is full time now. Tell them how thankful you feel to them. They like you to do so; I know they do. And God likes it-for He says so. Thank Him often. Be always thanking Him, just as you would do to anyone else who was always giving you new gifts.

Thank Him at your Meals.—How dare you begin a meal without thanking God for it? You would not take from me the merest trifle, without saying, "Thank you;" and can you take your food from God's hand without saying as much? If you gave a crust of bread to a dog, he would thank you, after his own fashion, by the expression of his eye and the wag of his tail. He almost speaks his thanks, and will you not thank God? Your fare may be ever so plain and ever so scanty. Well, it is not more plain or scanty than was that of an old Christian woman, who sat down to a crust of bread and a cup of water, and thanked God for "all this, and Christ too!"

Thank God in your Prayers. - Do not be always asking, and never acknowledging what you get, as if you got nothing. There should be much thanksgiving in prayer. We may believe it is not the least powerful part of prayer. Keep in mind what God has done for you, as well as what you want Him yet to do. As I have already suggested, keep some account of His mercies. Try to find out how many causes for thankfulness you have. Will you not try it to-night? Write down, one by one, the causes for thankfulness which you have had in the course of the day. I wish even the youngest of you would, ere you pray at night, think what God has done for you during the day, and be as particular in acknowledging the gift of God, as you would be in acknowledging the gift of a friend. Our prayers would be altogether different things, if there were more of *praise*—of *thanksgiving*—in them. What a help they would be to us!—what a plea with God!

Thank God in your Praises,—your songs of praise.—Why is there so little of singing God's praises among our children? It is only carrying out the spirit of our text, "Be ye thankful." It is sweet to hear children singing God's praises about a house, especially when there is reason to think that they understand and mean what they sing. How much more must it be pleasing to God! Yes, beloved children, your young voices reach up to heaven and enter into the ear of God. Sometimes, perhaps, you ask, "What is the use of Psalm-singing and Hymn-singing?" Here is the use of it—God likes to hear it. He says, "Offer unto God thanksgiving." He says, "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth Me."

"To render thanks unto the Lord,
It is a comely thing."

It is no useless thing praising God. Long ago, when Israel went out to battle, they took not only soldiers to fight, and ministers to pray, but also singers to praise; and it was more after the praising than after the praying, that God came to their help. So it was in the temple. It was not so much after prayer as after praise, when they had sung, "Praise the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever"—the very song we often sing still,—that "the house was filled with a cloud,

and the glory of the God of Israel filled the temple." Oh let us praise God more, if we would have more of His presence and blessing. Look at these Psalms of David—what constant praise was there. We should have more of David's thankful, praising spirit. What a help it would often be to ourselves, and to all who are about us. When we are sad and gloomy; when our mothers are downcast and all but brokenhearted, how it would cheer the whole house to strike up such a hymn as—"Let us with a gladsome mind," &c. Dear children, let your resolution be, "I must praise more!" God's people should be a praising people. In heaven, how much there is of praise! On earth, how much the best of the saints have praised! Go ye and do likewise.

2. In *Deed*. I might speak of our shewing our thankfulness to God by our *giving*. When any one has done you a great kindness, you like to *give* him something. I think there might be more in the way of *thank-offerings* among young people. Sometimes when people recover from sickness, or have an escape from some pressing danger, they present a thank-offering to God for their deliverance. Why should there not be something in the shape of a thank-offering on such occasions as your birthday, or at the New Year, or when you are raised up from a sick bed, or when a sick mother or brother is restored to you, or when you have completed your apprenticeship, or have got your first wage? Might there not, at such times, be some acknowledgment, of a

tangible kind, of God's goodness? I met the other day with a letter written by a little fatherless boy in England, in one of the Sunday schools there, along with his first contribution to missions. Here it is:—

"MY DEAR TEACHER,—I am happy to inform you that I have begun to work for my own living, and this is the first shilling I have ever earned; and I feel much pleasure in giving it to the Missionary Society as a token of gratitude to God for His many mercies He has been pleased to bestow upon me, praying that God, for Christ's sake, may add His blessing to the gift.—I am, dear teacher, your affectionate scholar,

But the best thank-offering of all, is a loving heart, and a humble and devoted life. Our praises and our gifts will not be acceptable to God, unless our heart and our life be in keeping with our professions of gratitude. The Lord wants *ourselves* as a thank-offering. Is there none of you whose word shall henceforth be, "Here am I; Lord, take me. Use me in Thy service. Send me where Thou wilt. Make of me what Thou wilt. Lord, I am Thine!"

I have, throughout this address, limited my remarks very much to the duty of thankfulness to God. And yet, any address on such a subject would be incomplete, that did not set before you the duty of feeling thankful, and expressing your thankfulness, to others. There are some grown-up people, and many young people, who, whatever kindnesses they may receive at the hand of others, seem to take them all as their due, and never

say, "Thank you,"-never send a word of acknowledgment to those who have befriended and helped them. I have seen a young person receive one present after another on his birthday with the greatest self-complacency, as if the friend who brought the gift were the favoured individual,—as if, for the time being, he were a little king, who thought it beneath his dignity to say he was obliged to anybody. I have known young people spending a long vacation with friends who shewed them every attention and kindness, who, when they left, scarcely said "Good-bye," and certainly never said to uncle, or aunt, or cousins, or servants, "You have been so kind to me," or "I'll never forget your kindness," or, "A thousand thanks to you!" Perhaps weeks elapsed before there was a single scrap of a letter, and inquiries had to be written or telegraphed as to whether they had arrived in safety, when the very next post should have brought a warm, affectionate, grateful epistle, with kind regards and thanks to everybody. I have known young people, after visiting kind friends, by whom they have been treated as members of the family, on their return home, exposing weaknesses, repeating things that had been said, and breeding dispeace, when they should have had nothing but good to say. I have known young servants, when they left situations where everything was done for their comfort and improvement, and a real interest was taken in them, making fun of kind masters and mistresses, holding up to ridicule their infirmities of temper or other failings; sometimes even cruelly blighting their character, so far as they could, when duty called them rather to speak of their good qualities, and to tell how kind they had been.

Where kindness has been shewn, gratitude is a simple matter of *debt*. The withholding of it, either from want of thought or want of heart, is robbing those concerned of their *right*. It is not beneath any of us to express our thankfulness to any one who has done us a good turn, however small. Indeed, it is a breach of good manners, it is indicative of a bad training, it is ungentlemanly, mean, and sinful, not to *feel* and to *shew* our gratitude where it is due. It is a bad sign of any one, when he forgets those who have befriended him, or bears himself ungratefully to them. There is a saying, "Good words are worth much, and cost little." That is peculiarly true of *thankful* words; and where need is, there should be more than *words*.

In that delightful book for young people, "Parables from Nature," by Mrs Gatty, there is a most suggestive chapter bearing on this subject, entitled "Purring when you're pleased." The expression has now become almost proverbial; and I should press it on all whom my words can reach, whether old or young, as no less than a Christian duty, to "purr when they are pleased!" And a thankful spirit can be cultivated. We can learn to be thankful.

I might have shewn you what a happy thing it is to be of a thankful turn. It is a precious gift of God.

Thankful people cannot but be happy people. Thankfulness is one of the great prescriptions for happiness. I am sure you never saw a very thankful man who was other than happy; and people who are ungrateful to others, are not quite likely to be found running over with gratitude to God!

III. THE SIN OF UNTHANKFULNESS.—I have not time to say much regarding this. Evidently, in God's eye, it is a black sin. He always couples it with other sins of crimson dye. In one place, speaking of wicked men, he says, "Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." Elsewhere He speaks of "the unthankful and the evil." And again, in describing the degenerate times that should come, he says, "Men shall be blasphemers, unthankful, unholy." See in what company the unthankful are ranked. If it is a "comely thing to give thanks," it must be uncomely not to give them. Ingratitude to man is very vile,—to parents, and teachers, and friends. It is hateful alike to God and man. But how much worse must be ingratitude to God!

Oh that there might be more of a thankful spirit and bearing towards those who have so well deserved our thanks on earth, and, most of all, towards Him who merits all our love! "O that man would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works unto the children of men!" "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"

"My God, I thank Thee, who hast made The earth so bright;

So full of splendour, and of joy, Beauty, and light;

So many glorious things are here, Noble and right.

"I thank Thee, too, that Thou hast made Joy to abound;

So many gentle thoughts and deeds Circling us round,

That in the darkest spot of earth Some love is found.

"I thank Thee more that all our joy
Is touched with pain;

That shadows fall on brightest hours,
That thorns remain;

So that earth's bliss may be our guide, And not our chain.

"For Thou, who knowest, Lord, how soon Our weak heart clings,

Hast given us joys tender and true, Yet all with wings;

So that we see, gleaming on high, Diviner things.

"I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept The best in store;

We have enough, yet not too much, To long for more;

A yearning for a deeper peace, Not known before.

"I thank Thee, Lord, that here our souls, Though amply blest,

Can never find, although they seek,
A perfect rest;

Nor ever shall, until they lean On Jesus' breast."

Pannen.

FATHER OF MERCIES and God of all grace, we praise Thee, we worship Thee. Thy ways with us have all been ways of love and faithfulness. Each day Thou hast given us our daily bread. Thou hast supplied all our wants. Thou hast given us Thy word to guide our steps to Christ and to heaven. And we have been very unthankful. We have been slow to see Thy goodness. We have often been murmuring and discontented. And when we got what we had asked, we have been like the lepers who forgot to come back and thank Jesus for their cure. Lord, make us thankful. How can we ever thank Thee enough for Thy countless mercies! We thank Thee for our life, our health, our food, our raiment, our reason. We thank Thee for our home comforts and joys; for our Bibles and Sabbaths and Schools and Churches. We thank Thee for a free pardon and a finished salvation through Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for Thy love even in chastening us. We thank Thee for the hand of Jesus stretching across the dark river, ready to take His people to Himself, when the time shall come. We thank Thee for the kindness of others to us. Make us thankful to them also. Make us cheerful, contented, happy Christians. Let our sense of mercy received deepen, and our gratitude increase, from day to day. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel. who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious Name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen.





2 Toiling early in the morning, Catching moments through the day,

Nothing small or lowly scorning, So along our path we stray, Gath'ring gladly Freewill off'rings by the way.

3 Up and ever at our calling, Till in death our lips are dumb; Or till, sin's dominion falling, Christ shall in His kingdom come, And His children Reach their everlasting home.

4 Steadfast, then, in our endeavour, Heavenly Father, may we be! And for ever, and for ever We shall give the praise to Thee; Hallelujah!

Singing through eternity.



F I were to ask, "What do you think was the great purpose for which you were sent into the world?" I have no doubt I should get a great variety of replies. Those would not be the furthest wrong who should answer, "We were sent into the world to work." If you inquire at God's Word, that is what it seems to say. If you ask God's Providence, it gives the same reply. And if you look into the world around you, and gather the answer from what you see on every hand, you will find it still the same. Whereever you ask the question, "What am I here for?" the same answer comes back,—"to work."

Work is not evil in itself. It is good. It is a blessing. There was work in Eden. There is work in heaven. Part of the blessedness of Paradise consisted in working. Our first parents, before they fell from the holy and happy state in which God created them, were workers. When God had finished the other parts of His creation-work, and had pronounced all His wonderful

and beautiful handiwork "very good," it is said, "there was not a man to till the ground." And when at last man was created, and was put into the midst of all the beauty and blessedness of a sinless world, this is the account that is given of it: "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it." So that Adam unfallen was a working man, and had you asked him in Eden what he was there for, he would have said, "to work." Thus, even if there had been no sin, and the whole earth had been a paradise until now, it had not been a world of idleness, out a world of work. The difference between work then and work now lies here—that sin brought the curse into the world, and it is not the work, but the curse that is with it because of sin, that makes it so hard and so bitter; the gospel of Jesus Christ being the grand cure designed to sweeten and lighten the bitterness and burden of labour, acting like the tree which was cast into the waters of Marah, and made the bitter waters sweet.

And what is true of us, is true of all God's creatures. None of them were made to be idle. They were all made to work. Take that common object which you see every day,—water. See it from the time when it springs up out of the earth, or from the rock, through all its after course. It never stands still. It is never idle. It is busy, as busy can be. It forms a bed for itself, and rushes on, carrying health and blessing wherever it goes. It waters the trees and herbage on

its banks: it affords drink to the beasts of the field: it turns the mill-wheel, and helps to make our bread: it goes into factories, and furnishes us with paper, and cloth, and a thousand things besides: it is carried in pipes into towns, and supplies drink, and makes provision for cleanliness, and prepares food for thousands of people: it is put into boilers and turns into steam, and drives our trains along our railways and our steamers across the sea: it carries countless ships upon its bosom: it evaporates and ascends into the clouds, and comes down again in the shape of rain and refreshing dew. Time would fail me to tell all it does. If any of God's creatures works, and works to purpose, it is water.

Or take the lower animals,—they are all workers after their kind. Take our horses. Whenever their foal-life is over, and they are fit for service, they are put into the hands of the breaker, and then work on till they can work no more; some being pensioned off in their old age by kind masters, others of them dying in harness, or being sent to the kennels. Take even the birds of the air, which seem to have so little to do, and to be always so merry. Even they have soon to work for their bread; and in the swallow, as it twitters and darts through the air, or the lark, as it soars singing up to heaven, we have a pattern of restless activity. It must be a good thing to work, since God has thus fitted and intended all his creatures for it. It may be a happy thing to work. The great thing is, that we do the work which God gives us, rightly and well.

Bearing upon this, we shall take one text from the Old Testament, and another from the New. Ecclesiastes ix. 10; and Colossians iii. 23:—

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord."

The substance of these texts, and the subject of this address is: *The Duty of earnest and hearty Working*,—the duty of doing, with all our might, and with all our heart, whatever work God lays to our hand.

Perhaps the best way to turn this subject to account, is to apply it to the various kinds of work which, in God's providence, "our hand findeth to do." It may seem as if this were rather for older people than for children, but I hope to be able in some measure to correct that mistake. It has to do with:—I. Schoolwork. II. Home-work. III. Business-work. IV. Soulwork. And V. what, for distinction's sake, I shall call, Christian work, though that name might most justly and properly be applied to all the others. Indeed, that is just the object which our second text has in view.

I. School-work.—I daresay there are some here who wish with all their heart that there were no such things as schools in existence; and if it were put to the

vote, I fear a good many hands would be held up for schools and school-masters being banished out of the world,—for books and lessons being put away, and nothing left but play,-for the "session," as it is called, coming to a final end, and the vacation, instead of being for a month or two in autumn, continuing all the year round! I think I hear some one say, "How delightful that would be!"-some idle boys throwing their caps into the air, at the very thought, and shouting, "Hurrah! hurrah!" Now I need hardly try to shew how foolish such a wish is, -how the school is one of the greatest blessings God has given to our country,how it makes all the difference between us and heathens, or savages, or brutes, so that, without the school, we should soon go back to heathenism and savage life, and be little better than the beasts that perish: -without the school, we should want all the help and enjoyment we have from books, so that the very Bible would be of no use to us: -without the school, our minds would become dark, and superstitious, and degraded, and we should be in character and conduct just like the unenlightened and sunken millions of India and Africa, and other heathen lands.

Did you ever see a person who had never been at school, or got any education? What a blank his mind was. To how little account he could turn himself. He could not be an apprentice, or even a porter, for he could not read the names of things, and could not make out the addresses on letters or parcels, so as to know

where to take them. He could not even read the names on the sign-boards above the shop-doors. How few sources of enjoyment he had. I am sure the idlest of you all must have felt, that after all, school was not such a bad thing, and that it was worth while to have all the trouble and vexation of lessons, and even the chastisement too, to avoid being like that. I have already told you * of a poor boy whom I saw in one of the wards of the Infirmary, and who lay there helpless, in a double sense, as being unable to read. While others could beguile the time, and improve their minds, and get profit to their souls, he did not know what to make of himself, and had his sufferings made far worse than otherwise they needed to have been. I told you also of a woman who came to me late one night to speak about her soul. She, too, had never been at school,could not read, and was all in the dark about what you know so well; and though I told her, as best I could, about the way of salvation,—about the cleansing blood about the love of Jesus,-though I prayed with her, and repeated, over and over, one or two short and simple gospel texts, it was vain to give her either tract or Bible, for she could make nothing of either. She went away to another part of the country, and I never heard of her more. Do you wonder that my thought that night was, "What a blessing are our Christian schools"?

Now I do not deny that the occupations of school

^{*} Page 264.

are work - hard, difficult, sometimes painful work. Hence I have called it school-work. There is no way of being a scholar but by working for it. You have heard of a "wishing-cap," which you have but to put on, and wish whatever you would like, and you get it! You would think some young people expect their learning, as they would like it, to come by the "wishingcap!" It will not come to us while we sleep, or when we are playing and idling away our time. Parents cannot give or leave learning to their children, as they give or leave them other things. Others cannot acquire it for us. Teachers, governesses, tutors, friends, cannot save us the trouble of getting it for ourselves. There is no "royal road to learning." The son of the labourer and the son of the Queen can only get it in the same way. The one may have helps which the other has not, but the one way for either is just by downright hard work. It is harder for some than for others, but in every case it is work.

Now, in the case of young people, it is peculiarly the work which their "hand findeth to do,"—the work which God gives them, as His work as well as theirs. I am not for your having too much of this or of any other work. Still less am I for having it all work. I know the saying, that "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Still, I would have the work of school to be regarded as work—God-given work, which cannot be neglected without sin against God—without being a loss to you; so that we must not speak of the

conduct of a scholar who does not work, as mere carelessness and inattention, but as sin.

The two directions given in our texts, apply to the full here. Regarding this school-work, the command is, "do it with thy might." That is to say, you are to apply yourself thoroughly,—to do your very best,—to spare no pains,-to grudge no amount of trouble. And "do it heartily,"-not unwillingly, not sullenly and sulkily, as if it were a hardship and a wrong that you should be asked to do it; not because you must, but because you would; not hunting up excuses for absence, pretending to be ailing, taking advantage of the presence of strangers, getting parents to write apologies to your teachers. Nothing of this kind. "Do it heartily, as unto the Lord,"—as a duty owing to Him, as having His eye looking down upon you. Seek to get a love for learning; pray for it; strive after it. The best scholars have not been the cleverest, but the most patient, and plodding, and hard-working. It is told of one of the greatest scholars this country ever produced, that he was slow and dull at first, but gave himself so heartily, and with his might, to his books, that, ere long, he far outstripped all his fellows. I believe there are lads in some of our workshops, toiling at some of the humblest handicrafts, who will distance in the race, and distinguish themselves more in the world than many gentlemen's sons, with all their advantages. And why? Not because they have better abilities. Not certainly because they have better opportunities. But because

they are giving themselves to the work heartily, and with all their might. You may see them carrying their Greek or Latin Rudiments in the pocket of their fustian jacket, spending more than half their meal-hour in trying to master some difficult passage; resuming it again when the day's work is over; up in the morning with the sunrise, and reading by the street-lamps or at the shopwindows, on their way home at night, -as one did, who now occupies a high position, -so that it is no wonder though they succeed. If our boys and girls would only do their school-work "as unto the Lord,"—as a sacred duty which they owe to Christ,-if they would throw their religion into their learning, there would be less need of prizes to urge them on, and no need of the coaxing and bribing or threatening that are so common. I pray that we may have many scholarly youths among us, who will add to the reputation of their age and country, and be famous in the annals of literature, and art, and science.

In that case, the *play* would be no less hearty than the *learning*. It is those who are best at work who take the lead in the games of the play-field. In our academies and schools, those who come off first as cricketers and fencers and the like, are not generally those who are to be found at the booby-end of the class. It is well to be hearty in play as in work. It may be said of the one as of the other, "do it with thy might;" "do it heartily, as unto the Lord."

And here, let me say that, alike for day-school and

Sabbath-school, every lesson should be thoroughly prepared. A half-learned lesson is not learned at all. An old Sabbath scholar told me lately that she owed her accurate knowledge of Scripture to her teacher having always refused to take an incorrectly repeated text, or an insufficiently prepared lesson. There is no excuse for it. With such time and such helps as our children have, the explanation is to be found in the neglect of the directions of our text—" with thy might," and "heartily, as unto the Lord."

II. Home-work.—This runs alongside of the other. By "home-work," I do not mean the preparation of lessons at home, which may be held to be included in the last head. I refer rather to the duty of young people making themselves useful at home. I would not have our boys and girls turned prematurely into drudges and slaves, but would have them-especially the elder children—to bear their fair share of the work and burden of home. There are some who are thoughtful and dutiful in the last degree, in this respect, almost as if they were "born nurses," or servants, or helpers otherwise. But it is not uncommon to see young people come home from school, fancying that everybody should be attending to them, never thinking of helping themselves, far less any one else, throwing down their bag and books, with no consideration for the overwrought mother or servants; and, instead of lending a helping hand, as might and should

be, giving no end of trouble and annoyance. The home-work is an important part of the training for after-life. If the burden is not laid on too soon and too heavily, it is wholesome discipline. I believe the labour of servants and mothers would be immensely lessened if the children, boys and girls alike, were to share the burden with them. The nursing of the sick, the care of the little ones, the performance of many little loving services, such as used to be common in former days in the best homes in the land, might well be thus shared. Indeed, there is hardly a duty about the house that would be beneath the dignity of any girl or young lady in a city or country home. So it used to be esteemed in the olden times; and we must not grow too fine for labour which God has dignified and made honourable.

It is sad to think how little of a help and comfort many children are, in their homes. It never seems to occur to them. Other people see a mother gradually wearing away with care and hard work, without even the sympathy or thanks of those who are the cause of it all. And how many needless annoyances are given! It would be hard to say whether it is more from want of thought or want of heart. While preparing this address, I noticed a servant, opposite my window, bring out her bucket, and set it down carefully for the dust-cart, which was just about to pass. One who would be called a "genteel" boy came along, kicked over the bucket, with all its contents, into the street,

and went on as if he had done some very clever thing. When the cart came up, I observed the labour which this thoughtless, or shall I call it heartless and malicious act, gave to the hard-wrought dustmen, after ten o'clock of a Saturday night. I rather fear there are things akin to this in some homes, hindering, provoking, fretting, instead of kindly and actively helping.

This is no unimportant part of the life-work of each of us—whether we are young or not—our home-work. After school hours, and on holidays, or during vacation times, it may seem to us as if we should have nothing to think of but pleasure and play. And yet here, too, the right-hearted will recognise the duty—"do it with thy might: do it heartily, as unto the Lord." There are some who have been taken away in early life, and others who still survive, who have left pleasant remembrances of themselves, in those services of love which they rendered, even as children, which are now treasured up in the memories and hearts of parents and friends long years after they have left the home of their youth. I commend this to the attention of all young people as a most sacred duty.

III. Business-work.—In some cases, this and the last run into one;—their home-duties are their business. When school-days are over, we are in the habit of speaking of "beginning to work." Now, some make a mistake here, in fancying that either from the nature of their work, or just because they are beginners, it does not

matter much how they do it. I need hardly say to what mischief this leads, in all after time. Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; and however humble the work is, it is each one's duty to do it as well as it can be done. If it were the work of a message-boy or maid-of-all-work, or even of a shoe-black or crossingsweeper, it is a duty we owe to God, as well as to ourselves, that we do it well. A good man has said. that if a Christian were a shoe-black, he should be the best cleaner of shoes in all the parish! I would especially press this on the notice of young servants and apprentices, and on those who are leaving school to enter on the active work of life. It is not a matter merely between you and a master or mistress. It is a matter between you and God. Pointing to that work of yours, as a kitchen-maid, or dressmaker, or shopgirl, or factory-worker; or as a joiner, or mason, or engineer, or clerk, or warehouseman, or professional man, He says, "Do it with thy might: do it heartily, as unto the Lord."

All that I said of school-work is true of business-work. Do the very best you can. Seek thoroughly to understand your work or business. Master it in all its details. Throw your heart into it. Take pains with it. Do not think merely of what you will get for it: of your wage: or even of pleasing an earthly master. Remember that One is your Master, even God: that Jesus has His eye upon you: that it is *He* whom you have to please. Do not be always changing from place to place, or from

one trade to another. I don't know what servants are coming to, moving almost every six months, as many are doing, not giving themselves a chance to do well. "With all thy might," says God: "Heartily, as unto the Lord." Oh if your work were all done thus, how different it would be!

There is this thought to be added, that it is often when people are busy at their work, that the Lord comes to them in the way of blessing. It was thus God called His servants, both in Old and New Testament times. Moses, Gideon, Elisha, the shepherds of Bethlehem, the apostles,—all were called when at their work. It is not only when we are in church, or when we are praying or reading the Bible, that we may look for a visit from the Lord Jesus; but when we are with our "might" and with our "heart" doing our common, every-day work, "as unto Him." A Christian servant, who had a one-servant's place, and who, I believe, is now in heaven, told me that her happiest day in the week was the Tuesday! It was the washing day, when she had to be up early in the morning, and had to work all the day; "but," she said, "Jesus is nearer to me then than at any other time, and I can hardly keep from singing for joy."

It would not be necessary to have the eye of an earthly master on us, if we went on the principle laid down in these two texts. We might be left alone on any day of all the week, and at any hour of all the day. So the Lord speaks to servants elsewhere: "Not

with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God."

It is most desirable that Christians, old and young, should be faithful and diligent in discharging the duties of their ordinary worldly calling. They should be examples in this as in other things. They should be enthusiastic in this. "Give me the work," said good Philip Melancthon; "let others take the riches!" "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."

IV. Soul-work.—This is rather a work to be wrought for us than by us. "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do." It is the work of Jesus to save. In one sense, the less there is of our working the better. When we come to deal with God about our souls, it is of believing, and not of working, that He speaks.

"Till to Jesus Christ you cling, By a simple faith, 'Doing' is a deadly thing; 'Doing' ends in death.

"Cast your deadly 'doing' down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in Him, in Him alone,
Gloriously complete."

Some time ago, a vessel was going down on an American lake. A man was tying his bag of gold about his waist, preparing to make for the shore. A

little girl came up to him, and asked, "What are you going to do?" "I'm going to swim ashore," was the reply. Looking at him, with piercing eye, she said, "Will you take me?" He could not refuse; and laying aside his gold, he took her instead, and struck out for the land. Each stroke sent him onward, till a great wave came and cast them both upon the beach. Her deliverer was taken up unconscious, and when, at last, he came to himself, his little charge was standing over him, loving and thanking him for what he had done for her. He had saved her. It was not her work, but his. The less she did, the better. She never struck one stroke; and it was well for her she did not make the attempt, but held on firmly by him. Her safety lay in clinging to him. And so it must be with us and our Deliverer. All we have to do is to cling to Him,-to let Him lay us on His shoulders, and bear us to a place of safety.

But then we must be in earnest about it. Here again the Lord says, "Do it with thy might:—do it heartily, as unto the Lord." If a cry of fire were now to be heard—what a scene there would be! What efforts would be made to escape: what cries there would be for help! How the youngest would seek to get out of the reach of danger! How you would strive and cry! Would it not be "with all your might"!—would it not be "heartily"? Dear children, will you have so much care about your bodies, and will you have none for your souls? Shall there be no attempt to

escape from coming wrath? no effort to get into Christ, the only Refuge? Is not the Lord saying to you as He said to Lot, when He drove him out of burning Sodom: "Look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain, escape to the mountain lest thou be consumed"? "Do it with thy might," I hear the Lord saying: "Do it heartily." And then—

"Our hearts, if God we seek to know, Shall know Him, and rejoice."

And, in like manner, after taking Jesus as our Saviour, what need there is of pressing forward,—what a fight there is with sin,—how difficult it often is to do the right,—how hard to hold on. We sometimes hear of men or boys fighting, and of their friends encouraging and applauding them, when otherwise they might lose heart and give in. *Our* Master looks on while we are fighting, and comforts, sympathises, encourages, succours. When we are resisting temptation, fighting with an evil temper, trying to do well, do we not hear Him saying—"Do it with thy might: do it heartily, as unto the Lord"?

V. CHRISTIAN WORK.—All these other kinds of work should be regarded as "Christian work,"—work done for Christ,—in His strength and for His glory. I refer now, however, more especially to work done directly for Him. He expects it of us,—even of the children among us. He looks for service. You may sometimes have noticed a little girl at school, whose mother has come to visit her;

nothing would serve but that she must have all her young companions introduced to her mother. It is such a pleasure, to tell who they are, naming them one by one, and regarding them thereafter as her mother's friends as well as her own. Have you no desire—you who are Christ's—to have your friends introduced to Him? Are you trying to do good to some of those about you? Are you seeking to be workers in His vineyard? Oh be earnest, and tender, and kind, and humble, in telling your young friends of Jesus and His love. "Do it with thy might: do it heartily." Make it your motto: "We all must work for Jesus!" The Lord send forth many Christian workers from among you.

There is some danger, in Christian work, of underestimating little services done to Christ, and of thinking that we may just as well do nothing at all. The youngest Christian child may and should do *something* for Christ, and whatever that may be, it has its own value, and is not to be despised. The poet Wordsworth was once asked to write a few lines in a child's album. He took his pen and wrote,—

"Small service is true service while it lasts,
Of friends however humble scorn not one;
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun."

The smallest service may lead to the greatest results. When John Williams, the Martyr-Missionary of Erromanga, went to the South Sea Islands, he took with him a single banana tree from an English nobleman's

conservatory. And now, from that single tree, bananas are to be found throughout whole groups of islands. Similarly, a few orange-seeds were thrown on the shore of one of the islands of the Samoan group, by some passing sailors, and now the orange-tree is to be found growing luxuriantly, and bearing its beautiful fruit, throughout the whole group. Before the negro slaves in the West Indies were emancipated, a regiment of British soldiers was stationed near one of the plantations. A soldier offered to teach a slave to read, on condition that he should teach a second, and that second a third, and so on. This he faithfully carried out, though severely flogged for it by the managers of the plantation. Being sent to another estate, he repeated the experiment there, and when at length liberty was proclaimed throughout the island, and the Bible Society offered a New Testament to every negro who could read, the number required for those taught through this slave's instrumentality, was no less than six hundred!

What is required of us, is just that we should do what we can. The question whether that be little or much, need not concern us.

"Jesus bids us shine
With a pure clear light,
Like a little candle
Burning in the night.
In the world is darkness;
Therefore we must shine,
You in your small corner,
And I in mine."

In bringing this address to a close, I am tempted to transfer to these pages two parables which I think fitted to be encouraging to Christian workers. The one I met with nearly twenty years ago, in the *Juvenile Missionary Herald*. It shews how much the smallest worker can do by *making a beginning*, and setting an example, which others are led to follow.

"There was once a farmer who had a large field of corn; he ploughed it and planted the corn, and harrowed it and weeded it with great care; and on this field he depended for the support of his family. But after he had worked so hard, he saw the corn begin to wither and droop for want of rain, and he thought he should lose his crop. He felt very sad, and went out every day to look at his corn, and see if there was any hope of rain.

"One day, as he stood there looking at the sky, and almost in despair, two little rain drops, up in the clouds over his head, saw him, and one said to the other, 'Look at that poor farmer; I feel sorry for him; he has taken such pains with his field of corn, and now it is drying up; I wish I could do him good.'

"'Yes,' said the other; 'but you are only a little raindrop; what can you do? You can't wet even one hillock.'

"'Well,' said the first, 'to be sure I can't do much; but I can cheer the farmer a little, at anyrate, and I am resolved to do my best. I'll try; I'll go to the field to shew my good will, if I can do no more; so, here I go.'

"And down went the rain-drop, and came pat on the farmer's nose, and then on one stalk of corn.

"'Dear me,' said the farmer, putting his finger to his nose, 'what's that? a rain-drop! Where did that drop come from? I do believe we shall have a shower.'

"The first rain-drop had no sooner started for the field, than the second one said—

"Well, if you go, I will go too; so, here I come.' And down dropped the rain-drop on another stalk.

"By this time a great many rain-drops had come together, to hear what their companions were talking about, and when they heard them, and saw them going to cheer the farmer and water the corn, one of them said—

"'If you're going on such a good errand, I'll go too;' and down he came.

"'And I,' said another. 'And I,' 'and I,' 'and I;' and so on, till a whole shower of them came, and the corn was all watered, and it grew and ripened,—all because the first little rain-drop determined to do what it could.

"Never be discouraged, children, because you can't do much. Do what you can. Angels can do no more!"

The other parable occurs in a tract lately published by the Religious Tract and Book Society of Scotland,* and teaches, simply and strikingly, that it is where God has placed us, that we are to work for Him, and that up to the measure of our ability we are to serve Him.

"A certain king had a beautiful garden and pleasure-grounds, abounding in all manner of fine trees, fruits, and flowers. One day the head gardener suddenly appeared, in great haste, exclaiming, 'Oh, your majesty, pray come and see what is the matter with your garden, for everything is fading and drooping.' So the king hurried out, and found it true that things were in a sad way. He first visited a noble oak, the finest object in the landscape. 'Why, what is the matter with you, that you are withering and dying?' 'Oh,' said the oak, 'I don't think I am of any use—I am so large and cumbersome. I bear no flowers nor fruits, and

^{* &}quot;The Oak, the Rose-Bush, and the Heart's-Ease."

I take up so much room; and, besides, my branches spread so thick and wide, that it is all dark and shady under them, and no flowers will grow there. If I were but a rose-bush, it would be worth while, for I should bear sweet flowers; or if I were a peach or a pear tree, or even like the grape vine, I could give you fruit.'

"Then the king went on to his favourite rose-bush, and said, 'Well, rose-bush, what's the matter with you?—why are you so drooping?' 'Oh,' said the rose-bush, 'I am of no use! If I were an oak, like that grand one in the middle of the grounds, I should be of some use, for then I would be seen for miles round, and should do honour to your garden. But as it is, I might just as well die!'

"The king next came to a grape vine, no longer clinging to the trellis and the trees, but trailing sadly on the ground. He stopped and said, 'My grape vine, what is the matter with you?—why are you lying so dolefully on the ground?' 'Ah,' said the vine, 'you see what a poor weak creature I am! I can't even hold up my own weight, but must cling to a tree or a post, and what good can I do? I neither give shade like the oak, nor bear flowers like the shrubs. I can't even so much as make a border for a walk, like the box! I must always depend on something else, and surely I am of no use.'

"So the king went on, quite in despair at seeing all his place going to destruction; but he suddenly spied a little heart's-ease, low down on the ground, with its face turned up to him, looking as bright and smiling as possible. He stopped and said, 'You dear little heart's-ease, what makes you look so bright and blooming, when everything around you is fading away?' 'Oh,' said the heart's-ease, 'I thought you wanted me here. If you had wanted an oak, you would have planted an acorn; if you had wanted roses, you would have planted a rose-bush; or if you had wanted grapes, you would have put in a grape vine. But I knew that what you

wanted of me was to be a heart's-ease, and so I thought I will try and be the very best little heart's-ease that ever I can!'"

- "If you cannot on the ocean
 Sail among the swiftest fleet,
 Rocking on the highest billow,
 Laughing at the storms you meet;
 You can stand among the sailors
 Anchored yet within the bay;
 You can lend a hand to help them
 As they launch their boats away.
- "If you are too weak to journey
 Up the mountain, steep and high;
 You can stand within the valley
 While the multitudes go by;
 You can sing in happy measure,
 As they slowly pass along;
 Though they may forget the singer,
 They will not forget the song.
- "If you cannot in the conflict
 Prove yourself a soldier true;
 If, where fire and smoke are thickest,
 There's no work for you to do;
 When the battle-field is silent,
 You can go with careful tread,
 You can bear away the wounded,
 You can cover up the dead.
- "Do not, then, stand idly waiting
 For some nobler work to do;
 What your hand each moment findeth
 Is the work God means for you.
 Go and toil in any vineyard,
 Do not fear to do or dare;
 If you want a field of labour
 You may find it—anywhere."

Pangeg.

O LORD, we adore Thee as the Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer of men. We praise Thee for creating us,-for endowing us with such powers of body, and mind, and heart, and soul. We thank Thee for sustaining us from day to day. We praise Thee for Thy grace in saving. May we be among the saved, and then may we do with all our might what our hand findeth to do. Whatever we do, help us to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, remembering that in the commonest things we serve the Lord Christ. Give us grace to be diligent and faithful in the preparation of our lessons at home, and in all the work of school. Help us to make progress in our studies, and fit us for all the duties of life. Bless our teachers, and make us a comfort and a joy to them. Be with us in our hours of play, and keep us from sin, even in our sports. May we be all that is fair and honourable, and kind, and self-denying. Enable us to be helpful at home. Keep us from false pride in regard to work. Let all we do be done well. Aid us in seeking to do work for Thee. May even the youngest of us be found doing something for Thee. Enable us to serve our generation by the will of God. Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us, yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it. And when our working time is ended. receive us, by Thy grace, into Thine everlasting rest. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

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